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SIR W. DIXON

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SIR N. W. WRAXALL'S  
POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS  
OF HIS OWN TIME.

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VOL. I.



SIR W. WALKER

POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS

LONDON:

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Dorset Street, Fleet Street.







HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES.

*Engraved by W. Read, from a Painting by Cosway, R.A.*

POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS

OF

HIS OWN TIME.

BY

SIR N. W. WRAXALL, BART.

AUTHOR OF "MEMOIRS OF MY OWN TIME."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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INSTRUCTED by experience in the legal dangers and penalties that attend the premature disclosure of historical truth, I do not nourish the intention of permitting these memoirs to see the light till I shall have been removed from the scene. I have done more: I have taken effectual precautions to prevent the possibility of their being published during the life of his present Majesty George the Fourth. In fact, the mention which I made of Count Woronzow, when relating the circumstances connected with the marriage of the Princess Royal to the late Duke of Wirtemberg, in the "Memoirs of my own Time," published in April 1815, constituted only the ostensible pretext for the *judgment* then pronounced against me. My real offence consisted in the facts or opinions respecting men and measures recorded throughout that work. Garrow, then attorney-general, who was retained by Woronzow, levelled his severest censures, not so much against the particular passage for which I was prosecuted, as



against the memoirs themselves, which he depicted in colours the most calculated to produce a rigorous sentence. The court condemned me, for an unintentional fault, to six months' imprisonment, together with a fine of five hundred pounds.

How averse Count Woronzow was that such a *judgment* should be carried into execution, he demonstrated in the most unequivocal manner. On the very same day, the 16th of May 1816, when I was sent to the King's Bench, he applied in person to Lord Sidmouth, then secretary of state for the home department, to solicit the *immediate remission of my whole sentence*. He repeatedly urged the same request to the Earl of Liverpool, and to Lord Castlereagh. Nor did he stop at the ministers, but twice personally addressed the regent himself on the subject. Finding, nevertheless, that all his efforts were ineffectual, and that ministers treated with neglect every application in my favour, he sent his son-in-law, my friend the Earl of Pembroke, to inform me of the circumstances here related. That nobleman having called on me while I was walking in the marshal's garden, on the *twelfth* of July, expressed in the strongest terms Count Woronzow's concern at the inefficiency of his exertions to procure my liberation from imprisonment, as well as the remission of the fine. He at the same time disclaimed, on the part of the count, his having

ever authorized the attorney-general to call for a *vindictive judgment* against me ; his only object in the prosecution having been to clear up his diplomatic character, as minister of the Empress Catherine the Second at the British court.

Some days, however, previously to Lord Pembroke's visit, as early as the *sixth* of July, I had received a verbal message from Viscount Sidmouth, delivered by General Manners, first equerry to the king. It informed me, that if I would *petition* the regent for my liberation, Lord Sidmouth would lay it before his royal highness ; which step would probably be productive of immediate and agreeable results. I instantly replied, that I preferred remaining in confinement until the 16th of the ensuing month of November, when the period of my detention would expire ; and then to pay the fine, rather than submit to present a *petition*. I added, that having only wounded Count Woronzow's feelings, without malice or design of any kind, by the mention of an historical fact,—for which unintentional offence I had made him the most prompt, public, and ample reparation in my power,—I had already acquitted myself towards *him* ;—but that, nevertheless, I was ready to address a respectful *letter* to the regent, requesting him to remit my fine, and to abbreviate my imprisonment. Having received in the course of the same morning, from General Manners, Lord Sidmouth's assent to my proposi-



tion, I immediately drew up a short address to his royal highness. General Manners conveyed this letter to its destination, and the regent laid it before the chancellor, Lord Ellenborough, and the cabinet ministers. With their approbation, it was determined to remit my fine, and to liberate my person; but, not till towards the close of August. This resolution was communicated to me verbally from Lord Sidmouth, by General Manners, on Saturday the *thirteenth* of July, the day subsequent to Lord Pembroke's visit; which visit was probably no secret to ministers. Count Woronzow, it is apparent, was determined to prove, that though he had instituted a *prosecution* against me, in order to vindicate his official diplomatic conduct, yet he had made every effort to prevent the *execution* of the *judgment*. The government, however hostile towards me, then judged it proper to interpose by shortening the period of my detention.

An event which took place in the month of August, retarded during a few days my liberation. The regent was seized with so violent a disorder while at the Stud-house, Hampton Court, as to render impracticable his removal. On Tuesday, the 20th of August, his life was pronounced to be in the most imminent danger. He recovered nevertheless with surprizing rapidity, and the *remission* arrived from Lord Sidmouth's office on the 30th of the same month. I did not,

however, quit my residence before the afternoon of the ensuing day. My confinement, indeed, had been rendered so mild as to leave me little except the name of a prison. I occupied two airy, spacious apartments, situate over the vestibule contiguous to, but not within the inner walls. The Earl of Abingdon, who, as well as myself, had been sent to the King's Bench, for a libel, many years earlier, inhabited them during his detention; and they had been recently occupied by Lord Cochrane. Every possible indulgence and attention was shewn me by Mr. Jones, the marshal, and by his subordinate officers, from the moment of my arrival, to the time of my departure.

Never, I believe, did any literary work procure for its author a more numerous list of powerful and inveterate enemies, than were produced by those "Memoirs of my own Time." The queen, the regent, and the princesses of the royal family, far from being satisfied with a portrait of George the Third, which, if it errs, can only be censured for presenting a too favourable likeness, were incensed at the freedom with which I had commented on the peace of 1763, as well as at the personal disclosures respecting the king himself, scattered throughout the memoirs. As little did the admirers or followers of Pitt approve my picture of that minister, though, in my opinion, rather a flattering resemblance: while Fox's partizans exhibited the most violent resentment at



my strictures on his moral, as well as on his political character. The just and impartial likeness of Charles Jenkinson displeased the first lord of the treasury, his son, in the highest degree. Many of Lord North's friends or connexions, insensible to the justice that I had done to that most accomplished and amiable nobleman, expressed the utmost dissatisfaction at my remarks on his junction with Fox in 1783. I must except, however, from this observation, his two sons-in-law, Lord Sheffield and Lord Glenbervie. The descendants of the Earl of Bute were implacable. From the present Marquis of Lansdown, I was indirectly threatened through a high quarter (the late excellent and regretted Sir Samuel Romilly) with new prosecutions in the court of King's Bench, on account of the unavoidable reflections which I had made on the circumstances attending the resignation of his father, the Earl of Shelburne. Men in official situations, or enjoying salaries from the Crown, were disgracefully selected to compose the article of the "Quarterly Review," which held up the "Memoirs," not to fair and liberal criticism, but to general reprobation, as an imbecile and immoral work : while the "Edinburgh Review," in defiance of history, and substituting impudence to cover ignorance of facts, attacked me in the most virulent language. Such was the combination of assailants which my inflexible regard to truth assembled from the most opposite quarters.

All these clamorous and calumnious efforts were nevertheless far overbalanced, in my estimation, by one testimony to its veracity which I received, and which I may now communicate to the world. The most prejudiced reader will contemplate it with respect. It was given by a gentleman of antient descent, of high character, and of large property; a near relative of Lord North, who had held a place in George the Third's family, as one of the grooms of his bedchamber, during nearly forty years, from 1775, down to the King's final loss of reason. I allude to the late Sir George Osborn. In a letter which he addressed to me from his residence at Chicksands Priory in Bedfordshire, dated on the 2nd of June 1816, only eighteen days after my commitment to the King's Bench, he thus expresses himself:—"I have your *first* edition here, and have perused it again with much attention. I pledge my name, that I personally know nine parts out of ten of your anecdotes to be perfectly correct. You are imprisoned for giving to future ages a perfect picture of our time, and as interesting as Clarendon." The last letter which I ever received from Sir George Osborn, written from his residence in Charles-street, Berkeley-square, on the 8th of May 1818, contains still stronger attestations to the accuracy and fidelity of my memoirs. He mentions in particular, with warm approbation, my character of Lord North, as well as my ac-



count of the peace of 1783, and of "the coalition;" adding, "Say with Milton,

"Graiorum laus est suis potuisse placere,  
Sit mea temporibus displicuisse meis."

This letter may be considered as expressing his dying opinions. He expired on the following 29th of June. I cannot too highly value such recognitions, which outweigh a volume of invective. It required indeed no little manliness of mind, and independence of character, to deliver testimonies so strong under his hand, addressed to a person in my situation.

N. WM. WRAXALL.

CHARLTON, NEAR CHELTENHAM,

15th of May, 1825.

## POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS

### OF MY OWN TIME.

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*April 1784.*—During the interval of near eight weeks which elapsed between the dissolution of the old parliament, and the time indicated for the convocation of the new assembly, all attention was directed to the general election. The successful exertions of the ministry, principally directed by Robinson, had gradually undermined the majority possessed by Lord North and Fox, till it sunk nearly to an equality; and the sovereign then interposing his prerogative, dissolved the parliament: but the people, and the people only, could sustain Pitt in his elevation. Never since the accession of the house of Hanover did the crown or the treasury make less pecuniary efforts for obtaining favourable returns to the house of commons, than in 1784! The general partiality felt towards government, throughout the country, which sentiment rose to enthusiasm; together with the condemnation which the *coali-*



*tion* had incurred ;—these sentiments supplied the want of every other means. Corruption for once became almost unnecessary ; and such was the violence of the popular predilection, that instances occurred in various boroughs, of men being forcibly stopped, detained, and finally returned as members to parliament, who were accidentally passing through the place of election, but whose known political principles constituted a sufficient recommendation.

However productive of national benefit in the aggregate this spirit might be esteemed, yet there occurred partial and individual examples of exclusion, which all moderate persons regretted. It was difficult to see without concern a man of such integrity as Lord John Cavendish making way, at York, for Viscount Galway. I well knew the latter nobleman, of whom it would be difficult to commemorate anything very meritorious, and who, whenever he rose to address the house, as he sometimes did during long debates, at very late hours, was usually in a state which should have impelled him to silence. His exertions at York in opposing the Cavendish interest, when combined with his affinity to the Rutland family, placed him nevertheless about the person of the king, as comptroller of his majesty's household, decorated with the order of the Bath.

Mr. Coke, whose descent, respectable character, immense landed estates, and agricultural pursuits

or occupations, so beneficial in their tendency, had seated him as representative for the county of Norfolk,—a man relative to whom Sheridan many years afterwards observed, speaking in his place, that “Mr. Coke disdained to hide his head within a coronet when offered him,”—yet even he, overborne by the current, made way for Sir John Wodehouse, who has since been elevated by Pitt to the British peerage.

George Byng, whose ardent devotion and indefatigable zeal, which rendered him highly useful to his party, induced Sheridan to exclaim, on hearing of Byng’s ill success at Brentford,

“I could have better spared a better man;” after a desperate contest maintained against Wilkes, for the county of Middlesex, yielded to his more popular antagonist. So strong was the general enthusiasm, that neither high birth, nor extended property, nor long parliamentary services, nor talents however eminent, could always secure a seat, unless sustained by opinions favourable to administration.

Erskine, who had so recently been brought in by Fox for Portsmouth, disappeared as a member of the house; but being employed in his professional capacity as counsel for Fox on the Westminster election, he soon re-appeared at the bar, where, by the insulting keenness of his observations on the proceedings in Covent Garden, he speedily attracted animadversion.



David Hartley, the “Dinner-bell” of the house, whose interminable speeches were, if possible, still more dreaded for their dulness than for their length; General Conway, so lately placed at the head of the forces; Mr. Foljambe, the heir and representative of Sir George Savile, as member for the county of York,—were all overwhelmed in the common destruction. Pitt became a candidate for the University of Cambridge; and that learned body, conscious that “the spirit of distributing prebends and bishopricks” had been transferred from the *coalition*, placed him at the head of the poll, giving him Lord Euston as his colleague; thus rejecting both their late representatives, the Hon. John Townsend, and the solicitor-general, Mansfield.

Few men held a higher place in Fox’s friendship than the former; a place to which he was well entitled by the elegance of his mind, his various accomplishments, and steady adherence throughout life. Though not endowed with eminent parliamentary talents, he possessed an understanding highly cultivated, set off by the most pleasing manners. If party could ever feel regret, it would have been excited by his exclusion from a seat so honourable in itself as that of the University of Cambridge, to which he had attained by unwearied personal exertions.

Earl Verney and Mr. Thomas Grenville, members for the county of Buckingham, the latter of

whom, unlike his two brothers, remained firmly attached to Fox; Sir Charles Bunbury, who had long represented Suffolk; and various other eminent supporters of the *coalition*, were swept away by the popular effervescence.

Pitt's triumph remained, however, still incomplete while his antagonist continued to represent Westminster; and every effort was made by the court, as well as by the government, to expel Fox from a situation so painfully conspicuous in parliament. All minor election interests were swallowed up in this struggle, which held not only the capital, but the nation in suspense; while it rendered Covent Garden and its vicinity, during successive weeks, a scene of outrage, and even of bloodshed, resembling the Polish dietines.

Three candidates appeared on the hustings, of whom Lord Hood stood foremost, having been selected for his naval services as a proper person to come forward on the occasion. Those services, though not equally resplendent with Lord Rodney's victory over De Grasse, had nevertheless strongly recommended him to general favour; nor were there wanting persons who considered him as Rodney's superior in maritime science and nautical skill.

Sir Cecil Wray had already represented Westminster in the late house of commons, during nearly two years, having succeeded to the va-



cancy caused in 1782 by Lord Rodney's elevation to the peerage. He united many qualifications, which in ordinary times might have rendered him an eligible representative for that city. Descended from an honourable and ancient stock, raised to the baronetage by James the First, nearly at the period when that order of hereditary knighthood was originally instituted, he possessed likewise a considerable estate in the county of Lincoln. His moral character stood unblemished; and if he could boast of no superior ability, yet his conciliating manners acquired him many friends. Unfortunately, as contested elections bring out into daylight every defect, his enemies accused Sir Cecil of parsimony; perhaps more inimical to success in an appeal to popular favour than much graver faults. Notwithstanding the popular prejudice thus excited against him, the poll, which had commenced on the first day of April, inclined during the greater part of that month in his favour. As late as the 26th he still maintained a small superiority in numbers over Fox, and sanguine persons anticipated with a degree of confidence his final success.

*May.*—In so critical a state of the contest, when every hour became precious, a new and powerful ally appeared, who soon changed the aspect of affairs, and succeeded in ultimately placing Fox, though not first, yet second on the list of candidates. This auxiliary was no other

than the Duchess of Devonshire, one of the most distinguished females of high rank whom the last century produced. Her personal charms constituted her smallest pretension to universal admiration; nor did her beauty consist, like that of the Gunnings, in regularity of features and faultless formation of limbs and shape: it lay in the amenity and graces of her deportment, in her irresistible manners, and the seduction of her society. Her hair was not without a tinge of red; and her face, though pleasing, yet had it not been illuminated by her mind, might have been considered as an ordinary countenance. Descended in the fourth degree lineally from Sarah Jennings, the wife of John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, she resembled the portraits of that celebrated woman. In addition to the external advantages which she had received from nature and fortune, she possessed an ardent temper, susceptible of deep as well as strong impressions; a cultivated understanding, illuminated by a taste for poetry and the fine arts; much sensibility, not exempt perhaps from vanity and coquetry. To her mother, the Dowager Countess Spencer, she was attached with more than common filial affection, of which she exhibited pecuniary proofs rarely given by a daughter to her parent. Nor did she display less attachment to her sister Lady Duncannon. Her heart might be considered as the seat of those emotions which sweeten human



life, adorn our nature, and diffuse a nameless charm over existence.

Lady Duncannon, however inferior to the duchess in elegance of mind and in personal beauty, equalled her in sisterly love. During the month of July 1811, a very short time before the decease of the late Duke of Devonshire, I visited the vault in the principal church of Derby, where repose the remains of the Cavendish family. As I stood contemplating the coffin which contained the ashes of that admired female, the woman who accompanied me pointed out the relics of a *bouquet* which lay upon the lid, nearly collapsed into dust. "That nosegay," said she, "was brought here by the Countess of Besborough, who had designed to place it with her own hands on her sister's coffin. But, overcome by her emotions on approaching the spot, she found herself unable to descend the steps conducting to the vault. In an agony of grief she knelt down on the stones, as nearly over the place occupied by the corpse as I could direct, and there deposited the flowers, enjoining me the performance of an office to which she was unequal. I fulfilled her wishes."

Such as I have here described her, was Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, who, for her beauty, accomplishments, and the decided part which she took against the minister of her day, may be aptly compared to Anne Genevieve de Bourbon, Duchesse de Longueville, in the French annals,

immortalized by La Rochefoucault's passion for her, nor less famous for her opposition to Anne of Austria and Mazarin, during the minority of Louis the Fourteenth. This charming person gave her hand, at seventeen years of age, to William, Duke of Devonshire; a nobleman whose constitutional apathy formed his distinguishing characteristic. His figure was tall and manly, though not animated or graceful; his manners always calm and unruffled. He seemed to be incapable of any strong emotion, and destitute of all energy or activity of mind. As play became indispensable in order to rouse him from this lethargic habit, and to awaken his torpid faculties, he passed his evenings usually at Brookes's, engaged at whist or faro. Yet, beneath so quiet an exterior, he possessed a highly improved understanding; and on all disputes that occasionally arose among the members of the club, relative to passages of the Roman poets or historians, I know that appeal was commonly made to the duke, and his decision or opinion was regarded as final. Inheriting with his immense fortune the hereditary probity characteristic of the family of Cavendish; if not a superior man, he was an honourable and respectable member of society. Nor did the somnolent tranquillity of his temper by any means render him insensible to the seduction of female charms. The present Duchess Dowager of Devonshire, after having long constituted the object



of his avowed attachment, and long maintained the firmest hold of his affections, as Lady Elizabeth Foster, finished by becoming his second wife.

The opposition, if considered as a party, enjoyed at this time some political advantages, which probably never can be again realized in so eminent a degree as they existed in 1784. Three palaces, situate at the west end of the town, the gates of which were constantly thrown open to every parliamentary adherent of the *coalition*, then formed rallying points of union. The first of these structures, Devonshire House, placed on a commanding eminence in Piccadilly, opposite to the Green Park, seemed to look down on the Queen's House, constructed by Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire, in a situation much less favoured by nature. In right of his maternal descent from the Boyles, Earls of Burlington, the magnificent mansion of that name, in the same street, at a very inconsiderable distance to the east, constituted likewise a part of the Duke of Devonshire's patrimonial property. It was then occupied by his brother-in-law, the Duke of Portland; who, as the acknowledged leader of the Whigs since the Marquis of Rockingham's decease, could not shut his doors, even had he been so inclined, against his followers. Carlton House itself, newly become the residence of the Prince of Wales, might be considered as the asylum of all Fox's friends; where perpetual entertainments of every descrip-

tion cheered them under the heavy reverse of fortune which they had recently experienced, and held out the prospect of a more prosperous future. Meanwhile, the month of April verging to its close, and almost all the inhabitants of the metropolis who possessed votes for Westminster having been already polled, there remained no resource equal to the emergency, except by bringing up the voters residing in the outskirts of the town, or in the circumjacent villages.

This task, however irksome it might be to a female of so elevated a class, and little consonant as it seemed even to female delicacy under certain points of view, the Duchess of Devonshire cheerfully undertook in such a cause. Having associated to the execution her sister, Viscountess Duncannon, who participated the duchess's political enthusiasm; these ladies, being previously furnished with lists of out-lying voters, drove to their respective dwellings. Neither entreaties nor promises were spared. In some instances even personal caresses were said to have been permitted, in order to prevail on the surly or inflexible; and there can be no doubt of common mechanics having been conveyed to the hustings, on more than one occasion, by the duchess, in her own coach.

The effect of so powerful an intervention soon manifested itself. During the first days of May, Fox, who a month earlier had fallen



above a hundred votes behind Sir Cecil, passed him by at least that number. Conscious, nevertheless, that the least relaxation in their efforts might probably enable the adversary to resume his superiority, and aware of the exertions which government would make to ensure the success of their candidate; the duchess, sacrificing her time wholly to the object, never intermitted for a single day her laborious toils. In fact, ministers did not fail to bring forward an opponent of no ordinary description, in the person of the Countess of Salisbury, whose husband had been recently appointed to the office of lord chamberlain.

In graces of person and demeanour, no less than in mental attainments, Lady Salisbury yielded to few females of the court of George the Third. But she wanted, nevertheless, two qualities eminently contributing to success in such a struggle, both which met in her political rival. The first of these was youth; the duchess numbering scarcely twenty-six years, while the countess had nearly completed thirty-four.

The Duchess of Devonshire never seemed to be conscious of her rank; Lady Salisbury ceased not for an instant to remember, and to compel others to recollect it. Nor did the effects fail to correspond with the moral causes thus put into action. Every day augmenting Fox's majority, it appeared that on the 16th of May, to which

period the contest was protracted, he stood two hundred and thirty-five votes above Sir Cecil on the books of the poll.

*17th May.*—Under those circumstances it became unquestionably the duty of the returning officer to declare that Lord Hood and Fox possessed an ostensible plurality of votes. The high bailiff, Corbett, being in the interests of the administration, chose nevertheless rather to violate all the rules laid down for governing elections, and even to leave Westminster wholly unrepresented in parliament, than to return Fox as one of the members. Yielding to the demands for a scrutiny made by the friends of Sir Cecil, Corbett thus contrived to elude and to postpone all decision on the main point; but he could not prevent the popular triumph of “the Man of the People,” as he was denominated by his own adherents.

The procession in honour of Fox’s election instantly took place. After having carried the successful candidate, elevated in a chair adorned with laurel, through the principal streets at the west end of the town; the gates of Carlton House being thrown open expressly for the purpose, Fox, followed by the populace, passed through the court in front of the palace. The ostrich plumes, which transport us to the field of Cressy, and which during more than four centuries have constituted the crest of the successive heirs appa-



rent to the English throne, were openly borne before the newly-elected member:—an exhibition that inspired many beholders with sentiments such as were felt by numbers among the Roman people, when Antony displayed the deities of Egypt, mingled with the eagles of the republic;

“Interque signa, turpe, militaria,  
Sol adspicit canopeum.”

Nor were the eminent election services rendered by the Duchess of Devonshire and other distinguished females forgotten, when celebrating so joyful an event; a flag, on which was inscribed “Sacred to Female Patriotism,” being waved by a horseman in the cavalcade. The equipages of the Dukes of Devonshire and Portland, drawn each by six horses, attracted less attention than Fox’s own carriage; on the box of which, or mounted on the braces and other parts, were seen the Hon. Colonel North, Lord North’s eldest son, afterwards Earl of Guildford; Mr. Adam, who, only a few years before, had wounded the member for Westminster in a duel; and various other friends or followers of Lord North, now intermingled with their former adversaries. Burke was not, however, to be found among this motley group. The procession finally terminated at Devonshire House; where, on its entering the great court in front of the edifice, the Prince of Wales, who had already saluted the successful candidate from the garden wall on the side of Berkeley-

street, appeared within the balustrade before the mansion, accompanied by the most eminent individuals of both sexes, attached to the *coalition*. Fox then dismissed the assembled mob, with a brief harangue; but their intemperate joy was manifested at night by illuminations, to which succeeded some acts of brutal violence and insult, principally levelled against Lord Temple's house in Pall Mall, who had become obnoxious to the party, from the early and conspicuous share that he had taken in producing a change of ministers.

18th May.—These demonstrations of the exultation inspired by Fox's triumph, appearing, nevertheless, still inadequate to the magnitude and importance of the occasion, the Prince determined to celebrate it by giving an appropriate entertainment at Carlton House. Having selected for that purpose the following morning, when all the rank, beauty, and talents of the opposition party were assembled by invitation on the lawn of his palace, the weather being uncommonly fine, a splendid fête took place, precisely at the time when his majesty was proceeding in state down St. James's Park, in order to open the new parliament. The wall of Carlton gardens, and that barrier only, formed the separation between them. Here, while the younger part of the company were more actively engaged, might be contemplated, under the umbrage of trees, an exhibition such as fancy places in the Elysian Fields, the



“*sedes discretas piorum*,” where all mortal recollections or enmities are supposed to be obliterated. Lord North, dressed, like every other individual invited, in his new livery of blue and buff, beheld himself surrounded by those very persons who, scarcely fifteen months earlier, affected to regard him as an object of national execration, deserving capital punishment. They now crowded round him, to admire the sallies of his wit, or to applaud the playful charms of his conversation. Lord Derby and Lord Beauchamp, two noblemen long opposed to each other; Colonel North and George Byng, enemies lately the most inveterate; Fitzpatrick and Adam, depositing their animosities at the Prince’s feet, or rather at the altar of ambition and of interest,—were here seen to join in perfect harmony.

The scene of festivity became transferred on the same night to Lower Grosvenor-street, where Mrs. Crewe, the lady of Mr. Crewe, (then member for the county of Chester, since raised by Fox to the peerage in 1806,) gave a splendid entertainment, in commemoration of the victory obtained over ministers in Covent Garden. Though necessarily conducted on a more limited scale than that of the morning, it exhibited not less its own appropriate features, and was composed of nearly the same company. Mrs. Crewe, the intimate friend of Fox, one of the most accomplished and charming women of her time,

had exerted herself in securing his election, if not as efficaciously, yet as enthusiastically, as the Duchess of Devonshire. On this occasion the ladies, no less than the men, were all habited in blue and buff. The Prince of Wales was present in that dress. After supper a toast having been given by his royal highness, consisting of the words "True Blue, and Mrs. Crewe," which was received with rapture; she rose, and proposed another health, expressive of her gratitude, and not less laconic, namely, "True Blue, and all of you."

Nor did the exhibitions of party joy terminate here. Under the auspices of the heir-apparent, his residence presented, some days later, a second fête of the most expensive, magnificent, and varied description; prolonged in defiance of usage, and almost of human nature, from the noon of one day to the following morning. Every production that taste and luxury could assemble, was exhausted; the foreign ministers resident in London assisting at its celebration. A splendid banquet was served up to the ladies; on whom, in the spirit of chivalry, his royal highness and the gentlemen present waited while they were seated at table. It must be owned that on these occasions, for which he seemed peculiarly formed, he appeared to great advantage. Louis the Fourteenth himself could scarcely have eclipsed the son of George the Third in a ball-room, or when



doing the honours of his palace, surrounded by the pomp and attributes of luxury and royal state.

While the opposition thus indulged their intemperate joy on the election victory won with so much difficulty, Pitt, more judiciously employed in cementing the foundations of his political elevation, distributed peerages among his adherents. He had early secured the powerful co-operation of the Duke of Northumberland, who, from his vast property, when added to his local and official influence throughout the county of Middlesex, possessed a commanding interest in Westminster.

This nobleman, from the condition of a Yorkshire baronet of the name of Smithson, had, in consequence of his marriage with the heiress of the Percys, been successively raised to the dignities of Earl and Duke of Northumberland. His eldest son, Earl Percy, having formed a matrimonial alliance with Lady Anne Stuart, daughter of the Earl of Bute, which proved equally unhappy and destitute of issue; the duchess, his mother, turned her eyes towards Lord Algernon, her second and only remaining son, as the best chance for perpetuating the line. Being of a delicate and feeble constitution, he had, by order of his physicians, visited the South of France, in which country he passed the winter of the year 1774 at the city of Aix in Provence. During an excursion which he made to Marseilles,

Lord Algernon accidentally met, in private company, the second daughter of Mr. Burrell, a commissioner of excise. Having accompanied her father to the shore of the Mediterranean, where he had repaired in pursuit of health, it was her fortune to make a deep impression on Lord Algernon. The Duchess of Northumberland, sinking under a decayed constitution, which was rapidly conducting her to the grave, and anxious to see her youngest son married, readily consented to their union, which took place in 1775, about eighteen months previous to her own decease. From this contingency may be said to have originated the rapid elevation of the Burrell family; one of the most singular events of our time.

Scarcely three years after Lady Algernon Percy's marriage, the youngest of her sisters bestowed her hand on the Duke of Hamilton; since whose death she has been, a second time, united to the Marquis of Exeter.

In 1779, the late Duke of Northumberland, then Earl Percy, having obtained a divorce from his countess, selected for his second wife Mr. Burrell's sole remaining unmarried daughter.

But the fortune of the family was by no means confined to the females. The only son, a young man (it must be owned, for I knew him well,) of the most graceful person and the most engaging manners, having captivated the affections of Lady Elizabeth Bertie, eldest daughter of Peregrine,



Duke of Ancaster, she married him. Scarcely had the nuptials taken place, when her brother, the young duke, not yet twenty-three years of age, was carried off by a sudden and violent distemper. The ducal title reverted back to his uncle; but a barony of Edward the Second's creation, early in the fourteenth century, namely, Willoughby of Eresby, descended, together with great part of the Ancaster estates, to Lady Elizabeth Burrell. Nor did this peerage constitute her only dowry; with it she likewise inherited, during her life, the high feudal office of lord great chamberlain of England, which has been ever since executed by her husband or son. Finally, Mr. Burrell himself, after being first knighted, was raised to the rank of a British peer in 1796, by the title of Lord Gwydir.

In no private family, within my remembrance, has that prosperous chain of events which we denominate fortune, appeared to be so conspicuously displayed, or so strongly exemplified, as in the case before us. The peerage of the Burrells was not derived from any of the obvious sources that almost exclusively and invariably conduct, among us, to that eminence. It did not flow from favouritism, like the dignities attained by Carr and Villiers under James the First, or by the Earls of Warwick and of Holland in the succeeding reign. As little was it produced by female charms, such as first raised the Churchills in 1685,

the Hobarts under George the Second, and the Conynghams at a very recent period. Nor did it arise from pre-eminent parliamentary abilities, combined with eloquence; such as enabled Pulteney and Pitt, disdaining all gradations, and trampling on obstacles, to seize at once on earldoms as their birthright. Neither was it the reward of long, patient, supple, laborious, official talents and services, by which, in our time, Jenkinson, Eden, Dundas, and Vansittart were carried up to the house of lords. Mr. Burrell, who was destitute of any profession, could not open to himself the doors of that assembly by legal knowledge, or by resplendent achievements performed on either element, of the land or of the water. Lastly, he possessed no such overwhelming borough interest, or landed property, as could enable him at a propitious juncture, like Sir James Lowther, to dictate his pleasure to ministers and to kings. The patrimonial inheritance of the Burrells was composed of a very small estate situate at Beckenham in Kent. In his figure, address, and advantages of person, accompanied with great elegance of deportment, might be said to consist the foundations of his elevation. But even these qualities or endowments, which effected his marriage with a daughter of the Duke of Ancaster, would not have advanced him beyond the rank of a commoner, if an event the most improbable, namely, the death of his brother-



in-law, the young duke, though cast by nature in an athletic mould, had not rendered his wife a peeress in her own right; vesting in her, at the same time, one of the greatest hereditary offices of the English monarchy. As little did his three sisters owe their elevation to extraordinary beauty, such as triumphed over all competition, and surmounted every obstacle, in the instance of the Gunnings. Never were any women, in fact, less endowed with uncommon attractions of external form, than the three sisters just enumerated. Modest, amiable, virtuous, they were destitute of those fascinating graces which the fugitive of Philippi attempts to describe in their effects, when he asks Lycé,

———“Quid habes illius, illius  
Quæ spirabat amores,  
Quæ me surpuerat mihi?”

I will conclude this digression on the Burrells by adding one fact more, scarcely less remarkable than those already commemorated; namely, that the charms which nature had so sparingly bestowed on the three younger sisters, who married some of the greatest noblemen in Britain, were lavished on the eldest, who gave her hand to Mr. Bennett, a private gentleman. I have rarely seen, and scarcely ever known, a more captivating woman in every point of female attraction.

Sir Hugh Smithson, after having attained in

his own person to the dukedom of Northumberland, which no man had reached since John Dudley, under Edward the Sixth, accepted at this time from the minister a barony, with remainder to his youngest son, Lord Algernon Percy. He succeeded to it in 1786, on the duke's demise; and four years later, Pitt raised him to the earldom of Beverley. We have recently beheld the late Duke of Northumberland, treading in the traces of his predecessor, procure in like manner a peerage for his younger son. So exactly is human life, and is history, composed of nearly the same facts, performed under different names, in successive periods. The king, who had held fast the key of the house of lords during eight months that the *coalition* remained in power, now unlocked its doors; four earls, and six barons, being either admitted for the first time into that assembly, or raised to higher gradations of the peerage, previous to the day fixed for the meeting of parliament. Lord de Ferrars of Chartley, eldest son of Lord Townsend, became Earl of Leicester. He was a man of an improved mind, agreeable manners, licentious life, and entertaining conversation. No individual of eminence in my time was supposed to possess so much heraldic and genealogical information. Descended on both sides from a train of noble ancestors, he inherited, in right of his mother, no less than five baronies of the most antient date, remounting to the close



of the thirteenth century. Having asked his father's permission to be created Earl of Leicester, previous to his acceptance of it, that nobleman replied with his characteristic humour, "I have no objection to my son's taking any title except one, namely, Viscount Townsend." Three years afterwards, in 1787, Lord Townsend regained the precedence that he had lost, Pitt having raised him to the dignity of a marquis. In consequence of Lord de Ferrars's new creation, the Cokes of Holkham in Norfolk, who, after the extinction of the Sydneys, had been elevated to the earldom of Leicester, became excluded from the hope of re-attaining that title, which had been worn by Plantagenets. Fox unquestionably intended to have conferred it on his friend and adherent Mr. Coke, if the *coalition* had remained in office. Lord de Ferrars laid claim to it, in virtue of his descent from Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, the *Cromwell* of the thirteenth century, who had nearly torn the sceptre from the feeble hands of Henry the Third.

Sir James Lowther received at the same time his recompense for having enabled the first minister to enter the political arena, where, in less than three years, he had raised himself to the summit of power. Overleaping the two inferior stages of the peerage, as if beneath his claims, Sir James seated himself at once on the earl's bench, by the title of Lonsdale; an elevation which, it might



have been thought, was in itself fully adequate to his pretensions and services. Yet, so indignant was he at finding himself last on the list of newly-created earls,—though the three noble individuals who preceded him were already barons of many centuries old,—that he actually attempted to reject the peerage, preferring to remain a commoner rather than submit to so great a mortification. With that avowed intention he repaired to the house of commons, where, in defiance of all impediments, he would have proceeded up the floor, and placed himself on one of the opposition benches, as member for the county of Cumberland, if Colman and Clementson, the serjeant and deputy serjeant at arms, had not withheld him by main force. Apprised of his determination, and aware of his having already kissed the king's hand at the levee on his being raised to the earldom, though the patent had not yet passed through the necessary forms for its completion ; they grasped the hilts of their swords, restrained him from accomplishing his purpose, and at length succeeded in obliging him to seat himself under the gallery, in the part of the house allotted to peers when present at the deliberations of the commons. Means were subsequently devised to allay the irritation of his mind, and to induce his acquiescence in the order of precedence adopted by the crown.

Such indeed were the eccentricities of Lord

Lonsdale's conduct, not only on this occasion, but throughout life, as justly to call in question the sanity of his intellect. His fiery and overbearing temper, combining with a fearless disposition, scarcely under the dominion of reason at all times, led him into perpetual quarrels, terminating frequently in duels; for he never declined giving satisfaction, and frequently demanded it of others. Capricious, tyrannical, and sustained by an immense property, chiefly situate in the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland; he expended vast sums in election contests, where he was nevertheless sometimes successfully opposed by Lord Surrey, a man not less tenacious, active, and determined than himself. Lord Lonsdale regularly brought in from five or six up to eight members of parliament, among whom were three Lowthers; and he was known to exercise over his nominees an active superintendence.

When we consider these facts, in addition to the merit of having enabled Mr. Pitt to place his foot upon the ladder which conducted him so rapidly to the head of the treasury, we cannot be surprised that Sir James Lowther should have claimed, and exacted, a proportionate remuneration. Fox, who had gladly availed himself of so powerful an auxiliary, in order to overturn Lord North, and who had stationed him in the front ranks during the session of 1782, no sooner beheld his translation to the upper house by the

minister, than he made Lord Lonsdale feel the full weight of his displeasure. Early in the session of 1784, alluding to the contested election for Lancaster,—at which place it had been unsuccessfully attempted to bring in a Lowther, and where a scrutiny was demanded,—Fox inveighed in harsh terms against the newly-created earl; whom, without naming, he designated in colours too accurate to be mistaken. “If,” exclaimed he, “a scrutiny had been granted, no doubt every stratagem to procrastinate, every artifice to perplex, every invention to harass, would have been adopted. All the exertions that a temper not the mildest when victorious, nor, when vanquished, the most patient,—all that unbounded wealth in its wantonness could have exerted, we should have beheld.”

Destitute of issue, male or female, by his marriage into the house of Bute,—a match which was not productive of domestic felicity,—he became attached in the decline of life to a lady whose death overwhelmed him with distress. As some consolation, he constructed a mausoleum for her remains, at Paddington, to which he often repaired; but he found more effectual relief in election pursuits, which occupied him down to the period of his own decease. That event happened not long before the dissolution of parliament in 1802, for which crisis he was preparing all his pecuniary means. Above seven thousand



guineas were found in his *cassette*, destined, as was not doubted, for those purposes: a vast sum to collect in gold at a time when, even at the queen's commerce table, guineas were very rarely staked, and when specie could scarcely be procured even by men of the largest fortune.

*19th May.*—On the first meeting of the house of commons, the most careless observer who had sate in the preceding parliament could not fail to perceive, on surveying the opposition benches, how vast a diminution had taken place in that ardent, numerous, and devoted phalanx which lately surrounded Fox, and enabled him during so long a time to hold the administration in fetters. Scarcely indeed had their leader himself been able to secure a seat in the new assembly. The uncertain issue of the Westminster election rendering it indispensable to procure his return for some other place before the close of April; Sir Thomas Dundas's exertions—not, however, without difficulty—brought him in as representative for the Orkney and Shetland Islands. Even there he met with an opponent in the person of Mr. Sinclair, since created Sir John Sinclair, and well known by his agricultural labours, who was chosen by the delegates of two out of the five boroughs in which resides the right of election.

The refusal of the high-bailiff to declare Fox one of the members returned for Westminster, though he had on the face of the poll an unques-

tionable majority, laid him under the necessity of taking his seat for that most remote portion of the British dominions, unless he submitted to remain excluded altogether from the deliberations of parliament. Some, nevertheless, of his most steady adherents, who had surmounted the political tempest, "*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*," were beheld near him. At their head might be placed the Earl of Surrey, whom we have since seen during thirty years exhibiting a spectacle new to the house of peers;—namely, a protestant Duke of Norfolk, taking an active part in all the legislative proceedings of that body. Nature, which cast him in her coarsest mould, had not bestowed on him any of the external insignia of high descent. His person, large, muscular, and clumsy, was destitute of grace or dignity, though he possessed much activity. He might indeed have been mistaken for a grazier or a butcher, by his dress and appearance; but intelligence was marked in his features, which were likewise expressive of frankness and sincerity.

At a time when men of every description wore hair-powder and a queue, he had the courage to cut his hair short, and to renounce powder, which he never used except when going to court. In the session of 1785, he proposed to Pitt to lay a tax on the use of hair-powder, as a substitute for one of the minister's projected taxes on female servants. This hint, though not improved at the

time, was adopted by him some years afterwards. Pitt, in reply to Lord Surrey, observed, that "the noble lord, from his rank, and the office which he held (deputy earl-marshal of England), might dispense, as he did, with powder; but there were many individuals whose situation compelled them to go powdered. Indeed, few gentlemen permitted their servants to appear before them unpowdered."

Courtenay, a man who despised all aid of dress, in the course of the same debate remarked, that he was very disinterested in his opposition to the tax on maid-servants; "for," added he, "as I have seven children, the '*jus septem liberorum*' will exempt me from paying it; and I shall be as little affected by the tax on hair-powder, if it should take place, as the noble lord who proposed it."

Strong natural sense supplied in Lord Surrey the neglect of education; and he displayed a sort of rude eloquence, whenever he rose to address the house, analogous to his formation of mind and body. In his youth,—for at the time of which I speak he had attained his thirty-eighth year,—he led a most licentious life, having frequently passed the whole night in excesses of every kind, and even lain down, when intoxicated, occasionally to sleep in the streets, or on a block of wood. At the "Beef-steak Club," where I have dined with him, he seemed to be in his proper element.



But few individuals of that society could sustain a contest with such an antagonist, when the cloth was removed. In cleanliness he was negligent to so great a degree, that he rarely made use of water for purposes of bodily refreshment and comfort. He even carried the neglect of his person so far, that his servants were accustomed to avail themselves of his fits of intoxication, for the purpose of washing him. On those occasions, being wholly insensible to all that passed about him, they stripped him as they would have done a corpse, and performed on his body the necessary ablutions. Nor did he change his linen more frequently than he washed himself. Complaining one day to Dudley North that he was a martyr to the rheumatism, and had ineffectually tried every remedy for its relief, "Pray, my lord," said he, "did you ever try a clean shirt?"

Drunkenness was in him an hereditary vice, transmitted down, probably, by his ancestors from the Plantagenet times, and inherent in his formation. His father, the Duke of Norfolk, indulged equally in it; but he did not manifest the same capacities as the son, in resisting the effects of wine. It is a fact that Lord Surrey, after laying his father and all the guests under the table at the Thatched House tavern in St. James's-street, has left the room, repaired to another festive party in the vicinity, and there recommenced the unfinished convivial rites; realiz-

ing Thomson's description of the parson in his "Autumn," who, after the fox-chase, survives his company in the celebration of these orgies.

"Perhaps some doctor of tremendous paunch,  
Awful and vast, a black abyss of drink,  
Outlives them all; and from his buried flock,  
Returning late with rumination sad,  
Laments the weakness of these latter times."

Even in the house of commons he was not always sober; but he never attempted, like Lord Galway, to mix in the debate on those occasions. No man, when master of himself, was more communicative, accessible, and free from any shadow of pride. Intoxication rendered him quarrelsome; though, as appeared in the course of more than one transaction, he did not manifest Lord Lonsdale's troublesome superabundance of courage after he had given offence. When under the dominion of wine, he has asserted that three as good catholics sate in Lord North's last parliament as ever existed; namely, Lord Nugent, Sir Thomas Gascoyne, and himself. There might be truth in this declaration. Doubts were, indeed, always thrown on the sincerity of his own renunciation of the errors of the Romish church; which act was attributed more to ambition, and the desire of performing a part in public life, or to irreligion, than to conviction. His very dress, which was most singular, and always the same, except when he went to St. James's,—namely, a



plain blue coat of a peculiar dye, approaching to purple,—was said to be imposed on him by his priest or confessor, as a penance. The late Earl of Sandwich so assured me; but I always believed Lord Surrey to possess a mind superior to the terrors of superstition. Though twice married while a very young man, he left no issue by either of his wives. The second still survives, in a state of disordered intellect, residing at Holme Lacy in the county of Hereford.

As long ago as the spring of 1781, breakfasting with him at the Cocoa-tree coffee-house, Lord Surrey assured me that he had purposed to give an entertainment when the year 1783 should arrive, in order to commemorate the period when the dukedom would have remained three hundred years in their house, since its creation by Richard the Third. He added, that it was his intention to invite all the individuals of both sexes whom he could ascertain to be lineally descended from the body of *Jockey of Norfolk*, the first duke of that name, killed at Bosworth field; “But having already,” said he, “discovered nearly six thousand persons sprung from him, a great number of whom are in very obscure or indigent circumstances, and believing, as I do, that as many more may be in existence, I have abandoned the design.”

Fox could not boast of a more devoted supporter than Lord Surrey, nor did his attachment



diminish with his augmentation of honours. On the contrary, after he became Duke of Norfolk he manifested the strongest proofs of adherence ; some of which, however, tended to injure him in the estimation of all moderate men. His conduct in toasting "The sovereign majesty of the people," at a meeting of the Whigs, held in February 1798, at the Crown and Anchor tavern, was generally disapproved and censured. Assuredly it was not in the "Bill of Rights," nor in the principles on which reposes the Revolution of 1688, that the duke could discover any mention of such an attribute of the people. Their liberties and franchises are there enumerated ; but their *majesty* was neither recognized nor imagined by those persons who were foremost in expelling James the Second. The observations with which his grace accompanied the toast, relative to the two thousand persons who, under General Washington, first procured reform and liberty for the thirteen American colonies, were equally pernicious in themselves and seditious in their tendency. Such testimonies of approbation seemed, indeed, to be not very remote from treason. The duke himself appeared conscious that he had advanced beyond the limits of prudence, if not beyond the duties imposed by his allegiance ; for, a day or two afterwards, having heard that his behaviour had excited much indignation at St. James's, he waited on the Duke of York, in order to explain

and excuse the proceeding. When he had so done, he concluded by requesting, as a proof of his loyalty, that, in case of invasion, his regiment of militia (the West Riding of Yorkshire, which he commanded) might be assigned the post of danger. His royal highness listened to him with apparent attention; assured him that his request should be laid before the king; and then breaking off the conversation abruptly, "Apropos, my lord," said he, "have you seen 'Blue Beard?'" This musical pantomime entertainment, which had just made its appearance at Drury-lane theatre, was at that time much admired. Only two days subsequent to the above interview, the Duke of Norfolk received his dismissal both from the lord-lieutenancy and from his regiment.

As he advanced in age, he encreased in bulk; and the last time that I saw him, (which happened to be at the levee at Carlton House, when I had some conversation with him,) not more than a year before his decease, such was his size and breadth, that he seemed incapable of passing through a door of ordinary dimensions. Yet he had neither lost the activity of his mind nor that of his body. Regardless of seasons, or impediments of any kind, he traversed the kingdom in all directions, from Greystock in Cumberland, to Holme Lacy and Arundel Castle, with the rapidity of a young man. Indeed, though of enormous proportions, he had not a projecting belly,

as Ptolemy Physcon is depicted in antiquity ; or like the late King of Wirtemberg, who resembled in his person our popular ideas of *Punch*, and might have asserted with Falstaff, that " he was unable to get sight of his own knee." In the deliberations of the house of peers, the Duke of Norfolk maintained the manly independence of his character, and frequently spoke with ability, as well as with information. His talents were neither impaired by years, nor obscured by the bacchanalian festivities of Norfolk House, which continued to the latest period of his life ; but he became somnolent and lethargic before his decease. On the formation of Lord Liverpool's administration in 1812, he might unquestionably have received "the Garter," which the Regent tendered him, if he would have sanctioned and supported that ministerial arrangement. The tenacity of his political principles made him, however, superior to the temptation. His death has left a blank in the upper house of parliament.

As Lord Surrey secured his own seat for Carlisle, so Sheridan surmounted all opposition at Stafford, and re-appeared in the new house of commons by Fox's side. He possessed a ductility and versatility of talents, which no public man in our time has equalled ; and these intellectual endowments were sustained by a suavity of temper, that seemed to set at defiance all attempts to ruffle or discompose it. Playing with his irrita-



ble or angry antagonist, Sheridan exposed him by sallies of wit, or attacked him with classic elegance of satire ; performing this arduous task in the face of a crowded assembly, without losing for an instant either his presence of mind, his facility of expression, or his good humour. He wounded deepest, indeed, when he smiled ; and convulsed his hearers with laughter, while the object of his ridicule or animadversion was twisting under the lash. Pitt and Dundas, who presented the fairest marks for his attack, found by experience, that though they might repel, they could not confound, and still less could they silence or vanquish him. In every attempt that they made, by introducing personalities, or illiberal reflections on his private life and literary or dramatic occupations, to disconcert him, he turned their weapons on themselves. Nor did he, while thus chastizing his adversary, alter a muscle of his own countenance ; which, as well as his gestures, seemed to participate and display the unalterable serenity of his intellectual formation. Rarely did he elevate his voice, and never except in subservience to the dictates of his judgment, with the view to produce a corresponding effect on his audience. Yet he was always heard, generally listened to with eagerness, and could obtain a hearing at almost any hour. Burke, who wanted Sheridan's nice tact, and his amenity of manner, was continually coughed down ; and on those

occasions he lost his temper. Even Fox often tired the house by the repetitions which he introduced into his speeches. Sheridan never abused their patience. Whenever he rose, they anticipated a rich repast of wit without acrimony, seasoned by allusions and citations the most delicate, yet obvious in their application.

At this period of his life, when he was not more than thirty-three years of age, his countenance and features had in them something peculiarly pleasing; indicative at once of intellect, humour, and gaiety. All these characteristics played about his lips when speaking, and operated with inconceivable attraction;—for they anticipated, as it were, to the eye, the effect produced by his oratory on the ear; thus opening for him a sure way to the heart, or the understanding. Even the tones of his voice, which were singularly mellifluous, aided the general effect of his eloquence; nor was it accompanied by Burke's unpleasant Irish accent. Pitt's enunciation was unquestionably more imposing, dignified, and sonorous. Fox displayed more argument, as well as vehemence; Burke possessed more fancy and enthusiasm; but Sheridan won his way by a sort of fascination. At thirty-three, it might be said of his aspect, as Milton does of the fallen angel's form,

“ — His face had not yet lost  
All her original brightness.”



Excesses of wine had not degraded its lineaments, eclipsed its fine expression, covered him with disgusting eruptions, and obtained for him the dramatic nickname of *Bardolph*. At sixty he reminded me of one of the companions of Ulysses, who having tasted of Circe's "charmed cup," instantly

"——— lost his upright shape,  
And downward fell into a grov'ling swine."

Those persons, and those only, who have frequently seen Sheridan at the two different periods to which I allude, can form an adequate conception of the metamorphosis produced in his appearance by repeated and habitual intoxication. It would have been fortunate for his fame, if Horace's invocation to the God of Verse, to grant him,

"——— nec turpem senectam  
Degere, nec cithara carentem,"

had been accomplished in Sheridan.

If we duly appreciate the impediments with which he, no less than Burke, had to struggle, arising from want of distinguished birth, connexions, and fortune, when entering the house of commons, we shall admit that transcendent talents were necessary to vanquish such obstacles. Pitt and Fox had comparatively none with which to contend on commencing their parliamentary career. Sheridan, before he was first elected member for Stafford in 1780, had indeed attained the heights of dramatic celebrity; and already, in the



opinion of many, rivalled Congreve. I never have, I own, so thought; nor do I consider him as entitled to dispute precedence with the author of "The Way of the World," and of "Love for Love." Sheridan's "Duenna," and still more, his "School for Scandal," are both unquestionably charming productions; nor does "The Critic" excite less admiration; but they, nevertheless, fall below the comedies of Congreve in brilliancy of wit and strength of composition, though they may possess more stage effect. The plays of Sheridan are likewise free from the licentiousness of Congreve: that defect was, however, the fault of the age, not of the author. Prior, and even Pope, are liable to the same imputation, and so are Vanbrugh and Centlivre: but the facts only prove that our manners under George the Third are much more refined and correct than they were during the reigns of Anne and George the First.

After Sheridan's entrance on the field of politics and parliament, he abandoned the comic muse; a circumstance greatly to be regretted. Perhaps, if Shakspeare or Milton had been so unfortunate as to attain a seat in the legislature, we might never have witnessed "Hamlet" and "Othello;" nor should we have boasted of an epic poem that justly ranks with the "Iliad" and the "Æneid." Lord Byron, beyond all comparison the first poet of the present age, has purchased

his "Parnassian laurels" by the sacrifice or dereliction of his legislative and parliamentary duties. Sheridan combined in himself the talents of Terence and of Cicero, the powers of Demosthenes and of Menander. In the capital of Great Britain, on one and the same day, he has spoken for several hours in Westminster Hall, during the course of Hastings's trial, to a most brilliant and highly-informed audience of both sexes, in a manner so impressive, no less than eloquent, as to extort admiration even from his greatest enemies. Then repairing to the house of commons, he has exhibited specimens of oratory before that assembly, equalling those which he had displayed in the morning, when addressing the peers, as one of Hastings's accusers: while, on the same evening, "The Duenna" has been performed at one theatre, and "The School for Scandal" at the other, to crowded audiences, who received them with unbounded applause. This is a species of double triumph, of the tongue and of the pen, to which antiquity, Athenian or Roman, can lay no claim, and which has not any parallel in our own history. Lord Bolingbroke may perhaps form the nearest approach, as he was both an orator and a writer. So was Burke. Fox himself, after a life passed in the house of commons, aspired to instruct and to delight by his compositions. But not one of the three can sustain a comparison with Sheridan, who may be considered, in a comprehen-

sive view, as the most highly endowed man whom we have beheld in our time.

In various points of useful or ornamental knowledge, he nevertheless fell far below Fox, who had visited the Continent, and was conversant in the languages, as well as in the literary productions, of Italy and France: while Sheridan, though a good classic scholar, had never set his foot out of the British dominions, except once, during a few weeks, and was a very imperfect master of the French tongue. He neither spoke nor wrote it with any ease, and hardly could be said to read it without difficulty. His personal courage was indisputable, and almost romantic; for he literally obtained the hand of Miss Linley by the sword. She was denominated "The Maid of Bath," and had a train of admirers. His two duels with Mr. Matthews, of which she formed the object, exhibited on both sides the utmost violence of animosity. Though Sheridan won her with so much difficulty, his attachment to her was not permanent; and very heavy clouds overcast the evening of her life, under the pressure of which she sunk into the grave. I will not disturb her ashes. They repose in the Cathedral of Wells, while her husband lies in Poet's Corner. Sheridan soon consoled himself for her loss, in the arms of a second wife. The invincible spirit which he exhibited as a lover, he would unquestionably have displayed in his parliamen-



tary capacity, had the occasion ever demanded it. But, with such consummate dexterity did he conduct himself as a member of the house of commons, that he never was compelled to give, or to demand satisfaction, though he sat there above thirty years. Lord George Germain, Lord Shelburne, Pitt, Fox, Tierney, Adam, Fullarton, Governor Johnstone, and many other leading men of both sides, were obliged to draw the trigger. Sheridan's calmness, good-humour, and wit, disarmed his adversary, without the necessity of accompanying him to the field. Pitt's proud and sullen inflexibility usually rendered him incapable of repairing an affront, or of offering any apology. Burke, in his anger, was impracticable and unpersuadable: but, I believe, he would not have accepted a challenge, where the offence had been given in his place, as a member of the house. He would either have treated it with contempt, or he would have claimed the protection of the Speaker. Throughout his whole political life, Sheridan manifested, in my opinion, much more real public spirit and love of his country than was shown by Fox. Of this sentiment he exhibited a splendid instance, which ought to render his memory dear to every Englishman, during the memorable mutiny that took place in the navy, in the year 1797; one of the most awful and appalling events which occurred under the reign of George the Third. Horne Tooke was so

elated by it, that on receiving the intelligence he exultingly exclaimed, "The revolution is begun: stop it who can!" Parker, like Massaniello, seemed, for a few days, to give law from Deptford to the mouth of the Thames: but the career of the Neapolitan fisherman and of the English mutineer were alike short, as well as tragical in their termination. Dismissing all party feelings, and impelled by more noble motives of action, Sheridan then gave the warmest support to government. Pitt did not, however, receive his advances, nor accept his magnanimous aid, with the liberality of mind, or with the testimonies of good-will and respect, merited by such a conduct. Dundas, who possessed a more conciliating temper, as well as a more accommodating disposition, ventured, as I have been assured from good authority, to reproach his friend, in the freedom of private conversation at Wimbledon, for such a repulsive treatment of the man who in a moment of general dismay proffered his assistance to the administration.

It cannot admit of a doubt, that if Sheridan had brought his abilities into the market, and, like Dundas, had exclaimed "Wha wants me?" or if, like Eden, he had quitted his party, made his bargain, and gone over to Pitt; endowed as he was with such various talents, he must have gladly been received into the ministerial ranks. Or if, after the French revolution, he had imitated

Burke, Sir Gilbert Elliott, Wellbore Ellis, Powis, Windham, and so many others, on whom pensions, employments, and peerages were bestowed; he might have named his price. But, whatever severity of censure his private life and actions may justly excite, his parliamentary line of conduct stands exempt from all reproach. Invariably attached to Fox, even when his judgment or his inclinations might perhaps have leaned another way, he accompanied that statesman in his fall; continuing steadily, however hopeless the contest might be, to combat by Fox's side during more than two-and-twenty years, from December 1783, down to February 1806. Yet there is good reason to believe that Sheridan deprecated, from the beginning, the too great energy, or rather the spirit of confiscation and ambition, which characterized the East India Bill; to which imprudent measure the *coalition* fell victims. In like manner, though he shared the fate which Lords Grenville and Grey attracted on themselves in 1807, by the generous but ill-timed and dictatorial attempt at Catholic emancipation; yet he had too much knowledge of George the Third's character, and fixed principles or prejudices, not to dread the result of trying to force that prince's conscience. With equal humour and truth he observed, that "he had frequently heard of men running their heads against a stone wall; but, he believed, his friends formed the only instance to be found in



history, of ministers who first built a wall, and then ran their heads against it." On the other hand, so defective was Sheridan's morality as a man, such were his known pecuniary difficulties, and so unjustifiable were the expedients that he devised and put into practice for his daily support, as almost to incapacitate him thereby from ever ascending to the eminences of the state. Prior, who lived with Lord Bolingbroke when he was secretary of state, and with the Earl of Oxford at the time that he was lord treasurer, in the same intimate friendship as Sheridan did with Fox, was sent by that administration to Paris, to negotiate, as plenipotentiary, the treaty of Utrecht. In the following reign, Addison, though altogether unfit for the office, rose to be secretary of state. But the king would no more have consented to name Sheridan his minister for discussing the conditions of the peace of Amiens, or have appointed him secretary for the home department, than Queen Anne could be induced to nominate Swift to a bishopric. It was not merely Sheridan's want of fortune; for, in fact, neither Pitt nor Fox had any patrimonial inheritance remaining when they respectively occupied the highest employments. Dundas stood nearly in a similar predicament. But, even Fox, though he had ruined himself at play, yet never had recourse to dishonourable means of raising pecuniary supplies for his subsistence. Sheridan's

whole life formed a tissue of inventions and subterfuges, as manager of Drury-lane theatre or of the Opera-house, to evade payment of salaries to the performers, and to elude the demands of his creditors. The tricks of *Scapin* could not boast of more originality or ingenuity than did those of Sheridan. They were current in every company, and would of themselves fill a volume.

One of the first objects meditated by Fox's party, after Sheridan's entrance into the house of commons in September 1780, was to procure, at all events, his election as a member of Brookes's Club. But his success at Stafford met with fewer obstacles than he had to encounter in St. James's Street, where various individuals of that society, impelled either by political or by personal antipathies, were resolute in their determination to exclude him. Among these, two held him in peculiar dislike: I mean George Selwyn, and the late Earl of Besborough. Conscious that every exertion would be made to ensure Sheridan's success, they agreed not to absent themselves during the time allotted by the regulations of the club for ballots; and as one black ball sufficed to extinguish the hopes of a candidate, they repeatedly prevented his election. In order to remove so serious an impediment, Sheridan's friends had recourse to artifice. Having fixed on the evening when it was resolved to put him up, and finding his two inveterate adversaries posted as usual; a

chairman was sent with a note, written in the name of Lady Duncannon to her father-in-law, acquainting him that a fire had broken out in his house in Cavendish Square, and entreating him immediately to return home. Unsuspicious of any trick, as his son and daughter-in-law lived under his roof, Lord Besborough, without hesitating an instant, quitted the room, and got into a sedan chair. Selwyn, who resided in the vicinity of Brookes's, in Cleveland-row, received nearly at the same time, a verbal message, to request his presence; Miss Fagniani (whom he had adopted as his daughter, and who afterwards married the present Earl of Yarmouth) being suddenly seized with an alarming indisposition. This summons he obeyed; and no sooner was the room cleared, than Sheridan being proposed as a member, a ballot took place, when he was unanimously chosen. Lord Besborough and Selwyn returned without delay, on discovering the imposition that had been practised on their credulity; but too late to prevent its effect.

Few men of genius since Sir Richard Steele's time have undergone greater difficulties; and none have had recourse to more extraordinary modes for the purpose of raising money, or obtaining credit, than Sheridan. Some were so ludicrous as to excite mirth, and can hardly obtain belief. He resided during several years in Bruton-street, Berkeley-square, where the house was frequently



so beset with duns or bailiffs, that even the provisions requisite for his family were introduced over the iron railing down the area. In the course of the year 1786, while living there, he entertained at dinner a number of the opposition leaders, though he laboured at that time under almost insurmountable pecuniary embarrassments. All his plate, as well as his books, were lodged in pawn. Having, nevertheless, procured from the pawnbroker an assurance of the liberation of his plate for the day, he applied to Beckett, the celebrated bookseller in Pall Mall, to fill his empty bookcases. Beckett not only agreed to the proposition, but promised to ornament the vacant shelves with some of the most expensive and splendid productions of the British press, provided that two men, expressly sent for the purpose by himself, should be present to superintend their immediate restoration. It was settled finally that these librarians of Beckett's appointment should put on liveries for the occasion, and wait at table. The company having assembled, were shewn into an apartment, where the bookcases being opened for the purpose, they had leisure, before dinner was served, to admire the elegance of Sheridan's literary taste, and the magnificence of his collection. But, as all machinery is liable to accidents, so in this instance a failure had nearly taken place, which must have proved fatal to the entertainment. When everything was

ready for serving the dinner, it happened that, either from the pawnbroker's distrust, or from some unforeseen delay on his part, the spoons and forks had not arrived. Repeated messages were dispatched to hasten them, and they at last made their appearance; but so critically and so late, that there not being time left to clean them, they were thrown into hot water, wiped, and instantly laid on the table. The evening then passed in the most joyous and festive manner. Beckett himself related these circumstances to Sir John Macpherson.

Some years later, Sheridan joined in a partnership with two ladies of the highest distinction, but whom I will not name, for the purpose of making purchases and sales, vulgarly called dabbling, in the public funds. The speculation proved most unfortunate, as they *waddled*, and became *lame ducks*. Nor was the bankruptcy of the firm the only evil that followed this experiment: but the subject is too delicate to allow the disclosure of farther particulars.

Besides the defect of moral principle, aggravated by the want of economy, Sheridan laboured under other disabilities, which obscured the lustre of his great attainments. He possessed, or exerted, no powers of steady and systematic application; such as, properly directed, might have alleviated the privations imposed on him by his political attachments. How little he cultivated

the comic muse, is evident from reflecting, that after he came into parliament in 1780, down to his decease in 1816, he never composed a single dramatic piece. His alteration of Kotzebue's "Pizarro," and its adaptation to the English theatre, was less a work of genius, than a financial expedient for attracting crowds to Drury Lane, made in his capacity of manager. Yet in the exertions of his own intellect he must have found a far more profitable and certain source of pecuniary supply, than from the precarious emoluments or employments which he occasionally derived by the elevation of his friends to power. In fact, during the course of his whole life, he never was above two years in office, taken all together; the first time, in 1782, when, on Lord North's resignation, he became one of the under-secretaries of state in Fox's department for eleven weeks. Under the *coalition* administration, he was appointed a secretary of the treasury during about eight months; and when Fox, Lord Grenville, and Lord Grey came into power, they remunerated him by the lucrative post of treasurer of the navy, which he filled scarcely a year. The situation of receiver-general of the Duchy of Cornwall, conferred on him by the Prince of Wales, towards the evening of Sheridan's life, constituted the only permanent official recompense that he obtained for his long parliamentary services.



Indolence pervaded all his faculties, obscured, and finally extinguished them in a certain degree. It is a fact, that when "Pizarro" was announced for representation on the theatre, he had not completed the alterations introduced into the piece. Even on the very evening that it was first performed, the concluding lines remained unfinished. Sheridan wrote them at the Shakespeare Tavern in Covent Garden not half an hour before the curtain drew up and the play commenced. The actors received and learned them before the ink was dry with which they were composed. So inattentive was he even to his own interests, and with such difficulty could he be compelled to exert his talents! He could, indeed, occasionally bend the force of his powerful mind, for a limited time, to one object, as he did in Hastings's case, when he attracted such universal admiration. Nor did he ever, as a member of the house of commons, betray want of information on whatever subject he spoke: but these were in general short and desultory efforts, not long-continued or laborious operations. The fame of Sheridan resulted from a happy combination of wit, eloquence, temper, and genius; not from sedulous application. He had not learned

"To scorn delights, and live laborious days;" without which renunciations lasting reputation of any kind is not commonly acquired. Like "the

great Emathian conqueror," who abandoned himself to excesses,

"Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,"

Sheridan may rather be considered as a dazzling and seductive meteor, setting ultimately in darkness, than as a steady luminary dispensing an equal light, and whose departing rays, if less brilliant than in his meridian strength, might have been nevertheless cheering and unclouded.

This extraordinary man, as he approached the confines of old age, sunk with every successive year in general estimation. Admitting that his faculties remained perfect, as I believe they did, they nevertheless became overcast from the effects of intoxication, licentiousness, and habits of dissipation. How different, we must own, was the tenor of Fox's life after the period of his retreat to St. Anne's Hill! Divided during many months of the year between rustic occupations, elegant literature, and the company of a few friends, Fox (a green apron frequently fastened round his waist) amused and employed himself in pruning, or nailing up his own fruit-trees. But Fox outlived his vices; those of Sheridan accompanied him to the tomb. Such was the characteristic and inherent difference between these two illustrious men!

The last time that I was in Sheridan's society, we dined together at the late Duke of Queens-

berry's, in 1807. We formed a small, select company; and he displayed his usual convivial talents, which never forsook him at table: but the duke, who was above eighty, and had become deaf, did not allow Sheridan to sit long enough, or to swallow sufficient wine, for fully expanding his powers of colloquial entertainment.

At the dissolution of parliament in 1812, having failed to secure his re-election at Stafford, he ceased to sit in the house of commons; a circumstance most inconvenient to him, as his person was no longer protected from arrest, while his debts accumulated. I have been assured from good authority that the Prince of Wales (or, more properly to speak, the Regent) transmitted him the sum of three thousand pounds, in order to enable him to procure his election for some other borough; but Sheridan, pressed by domestic exigencies, diverted the money to his own private necessities. From that period, during the four or five concluding years of his life, he, who had so long attracted the attention of an admiring public, insensibly became, if I may so express myself, half-eclipsed, and in a manner forgotten while still alive. Incapable of extricating himself by any efforts of genius or application (such was his habitual indolence) from his pecuniary embarrassments, he could no longer defy a host of importunate tradesmen who clamorously demanded pay-



ment. Like *Jaffier*, he might say that his doors were

“Barred and dammed up by gaping creditors.”

A friend of mine, a young man, having been arrested in August 1815 for a debt, and carried to a spunging-house in Fetter-lane, there found himself detained in a large apartment with Sheridan and Sir Watkin Lewes. The latter had been lord mayor of London, as well as one of the members for that city in successive parliaments. They remained shut up together for three days, at the end of which time Sheridan procured his liberation. He was morose, taciturn, and gloomy before dinner—for they all ate and slept in the same room;—but when he had drunk nearly two bottles of wine, as he regularly did, after dinner, he became comparatively cheerful and communicative. Sir Watkin, at near fourscore, exhibited equal good-humour and equanimity of mind.

Declining gradually under the attack of chronic diseases aggravated by excess, Sheridan's last scene holds up an affecting and painful subject of contemplation. A privy-counsellor, the ornament of his age and nation, caressed by princes, and dreaded by ministers; whose orations, and whose dramatic works, rank him among the most distinguished men of his own or of any period; expired, though not in a state of destitution, like Spenser, like Otway, or like Chatterton, yet under humiliating circumstances of pecuniary em-

barrassment. His house in Saville-row was besieged by bailiffs; one of whom pressing to obtain entrance, and availing himself of the moment when the front door was opened by a servant in order to admit the visit of Dr. Baillie, who attended Sheridan during the progress of his last illness, that eminent physician, assisted by the footman, repulsed him, and shut the door in his face.

Dr. Baillie, I have been assured, refused to accept any fee for his advice; and Earl Grey, who had so long acted in political union with Sheridan as a member of opposition, supplied him with every article for his comfort, prepared from his own kitchen. Nor, as I have heard, did the Regent forsake him in his last moments. If my information is correct, his royal highness sent him two hundred pounds; but Sheridan declined its acceptance, and returned the money.

Thus breathed his last a man of whom it might be justly said, as of Lord Verulam, that he was

“The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind!”

As Sheridan had secured his seat for Stafford in the new parliament; so Burke had been returned, by Earl Fitzwilliam, for Malton; and Colonel Fitzpatrick, by the Duke of Bedford's interest, for Tavistock. Sawbridge, with great difficulty, came in again for London, last of the four successful candidates on the poll. The Hon. St. An-



drew St. John, who had been one of the two under-secretaries of state in Fox's office, and who might be ranked among the most devoted adherents of the late secretary, carried his election for the county of Bedford, against Lord Ongley, by only one vote; and Mr. St. John finally retained his seat. He has since succeeded to the antient peerage of that name. Hare was again chosen, or, more properly to speak, returned for Knaresborough, with Lord Duncannon.

Not one among Fox's friends and companions was supposed to possess more wit than Hare; but his talents, brilliant as they were, did not qualify him to take a part in debate, however highly estimated they might be at a festive meeting, or in private society. Hare was, I believe, like myself, a native of Bristol; and, as I have been assured, of obscure origin. His accomplishments enabled him, however, to ally himself in marriage with a sister of Sir Abraham Hume, who brought him a very considerable fortune.

Lord Robert Spencer, not less warmly attached to Fox than was Hare, reappeared in the house; and, as if to supply by ability the numerical vacancies occasioned among the opposition ranks by the late dissolution, a new member, Mr. Windham, took his seat for the city of Norwich, after sustaining a long as well as a severe contest. His parliamentary talents, which soon rendered him distinguished, eventually raised him to some



of the highest offices of the executive government.

The first act of the house being the election of a speaker, Cornwall was a second time raised to that eminent office. His alliance by marriage with Jenkinson constituted his best recommendation to the chair, of which seat the "Rolliad" says,

"There Cornwall sits, and ah! compell'd by fate,  
Must sit for ever through the long debate."——

"Like sad Prometheus fasten'd to the rock,  
In vain he looks for pity to the clock.

In vain the powers of strength'ning porter tries,  
And nods to Bellamy for fresh supplies."

Those persons who, like myself, sate in the house of commons under Cornwall's speakership, will recollect and acknowledge the fidelity of this portrait. One of the lords of the new treasury, the Marquis of Graham, moved that the late speaker should be again placed in the chair. Few individuals, however distinguished by birth, talents, parliamentary interest, or public services, have attained to more splendid employments, or have arrived at greater honours, than Lord Graham, under the reign of George the Third. Besides enjoying the lucrative sinecure of justice-general of Scotland for life, we have seen him occupy a place in the cabinet, while he was joint postmaster-general, during Pitt's second ill-fated administration. At the hour that I am writing, the

Duke of Montrose, after having been many years decorated with the insignia of the Thistle, is invested with the order of the Garter, in addition to the high post which he holds, of master of the horse. In his person he was elegant and pleasing, as far as those qualities depend on symmetry of external figure ; nor was he deficient in all the accomplishments befitting his illustrious descent. He possessed a ready elocution, sustained by all the confidence in himself necessary for addressing the house. Nor did he want ideas, while he confined himself to common sense, to argument, and to matters of fact.

If, however, he possessed no distinguished talents, he displayed various qualities calculated to compensate for the want of great ability ; particularly, the prudence, sagacity, and attention to his own interests, so characteristic of the Caledonian people. His celebrated ancestor, the Marquis of Montrose, scarcely exhibited more devotion to the cause of Charles the First in the field, than his descendant displayed for George the Third in the house of commons. Nor did he want great energy, as well as activity, of mind and body. During the progress of the French revolution, when the fabric of our constitution was menaced by internal and external attacks, Lord Graham, then become Duke of Montrose, enrolled himself as a private soldier in the City Light Horse. During several successive years, he did duty in that



capacity, night and day, sacrificing to it his ease and his time ; thus holding out an example worthy imitation to the British nobility. His services were amply rewarded by Pitt.

After Mr. Perceval's assassination in 1812, when the prince regent attempted to form a junction between some of his own former friends and Lord Liverpool, the Duke of Montrose owed both the preservation of his place, and the order of the Garter, solely to the inflexibility of the individuals who refused those gratifications. If the Earl of Jersey would have accepted the mastership of the horse, the duke would have been instantly deprived of that employment ; as, in like manner, the Duke of Norfolk's rejection of the Garter determined the Regent, after long hesitation, to confer it on the Duke of Montrose.

*19th—24th May.*—The chiefs of opposition, conscious that, in the diminished state of their numbers, they could not attempt to propose any candidate for the chair who would have had the slightest prospect of success, acquiesced without a division in Cornwall's election. But Fox did not lose the occasion of commenting with indignant severity on the conduct of the high bailiff of Westminster ; observing, not without reason, that the house, which ought to have consisted of five hundred and fifty-eight members, was incomplete, none being returned for the city which had elected him as one of its representatives. He



added, that if the returning officer at Rye, for which borough Mr. Cornwall sate in parliament, had imitated the example of Corbett, the house could not have called that gentleman to the chair. This subject was again renewed, a few days later, when Lee, who had filled the office of attorney-general under the *coalition*, moved that "the high bailiff ought to have returned two citizens for Westminster." It must be confessed that if reason and justice had decided the question, it would have been determined in the affirmative: but, after a debate of considerable length, ministers evaded, rather than negatived the proposition, by a majority of only ninety-seven, the respective numbers being 233 and 136; at the same time commanding the attendance of Corbett at the bar of the house on the ensuing day. No sooner had this division taken place, which sufficiently manifested Pitt's ascendant in the assembly, than Mr. John James Hamilton rose to move an address of thanks to the king, on his speech from the throne. Like the Duke of Montrose, he has occupied a distinguished place in the court of George the Third, as well as under Pitt's administration. He had attained at this time his thirty-fourth year. Tall, erect, and muscular in his figure; thin, yet not meagre; finely formed, with an air of grace and dignity diffused over his whole person,—he could not be mistaken for an ordinary man. To the beautiful portrait

of James the Fifth, in Duke Hamilton's apartments at Holyrood House, he bore a striking similarity. Of a dark complexion, with very intelligent and regular features, he resembled more a Spaniard than a native of Britain; and his arrogant solemnity of manner, augmented by the peculiarities of his demeanour, obtained for him from Sheridan the name of "Don Whiskerandos," the lover of "Tilburina," in his own "Critic." Mr. Hamilton's abilities, though not of the first order, might have qualified him for public employment, at least as well as those of the Duke of Montrose, if he had emulated to attain office: but pleasure, rather than business—enjoyment, and not application or renunciations, seemed principally to occupy his mind. Even when moving the address to the crown, his partiality towards the first lord of the treasury, and his aversion to the opposition leader, manifested itself in a manner scarcely compatible either with the rules of debate or with the forms of decorum. After portraying Pitt in colours such as friendship lends to embellish truth, he, without positively naming Fox, designated him as "one of those men, who having dissipated their fortune, impaired their constitution, and prostituted their talents, entered the house of commons for the purpose of repairing their ruined finances, from motives of personal ambition and self-interest." Contrasting the two individuals, he drew the most favourable conclusions for the

former, as a minister endowed, even in youth, with all the qualities necessary for promoting the grandeur and felicity of his native country.

Mr. Hamilton then stood in the relation of presumptive heir to the titles and vast estates of his uncle, the Earl of Abercorn, one of the sixteen representative Scottish peers. This nobleman, far advanced in life, infirm, paralytic, and unmarried, was raised about two years afterwards to the dignity of a British viscount, with remainder to his nephew, who succeeded in 1789 to all his honours and possessions. Hamilton, who had been early married, was already the father of a numerous family; but having conceived an ardent passion for a very near relative, Miss Cecil Hamilton, he applied to his friend the minister, in order to procure for her from the sovereign the rank and precedence of an earl's daughter. This extraordinary request Pitt undertook, and finally accomplished. She was the youngest female child of the Rev. Dr. George Hamilton, uncle to the new earl; and, besides youth, possessed uncommon personal attractions. Nevertheless, such a concession on the part of the king seemed to militate against all the forms and usages of court etiquette, as she had four elder sisters. Charles the Second himself might have hesitated at such a proposition. Nor could a prince so religious as George the Third, or a queen so correct as Charlotte of Mecklenburg, fail to perceive, and to disapprove, the mo-



tive which impelled Lord Abercorn to make the demand. It is well known that Pitt did not succeed in obtaining it without strong marks of repugnance being evinced by their majesties. She was, nevertheless, presented at St. James's as Lady Cecil Hamilton; and little more than two years afterwards, Lord Abercorn, who had immediately become a widower, gave her his hand in marriage. But mutual infelicity soon produced a separation, and a divorce. The whole transaction, which might furnish matter for the drama, excited not less general astonishment than condemnation, and may indeed be esteemed one of the most extraordinary incidents of the present reign.

In 1790, Pitt raised Lord Abercorn to the rank of a British marquis. Those persons who justified or explained so many marks of ministerial favour, on ordinary principles of human action, observed, that no honours or concessions in the power of the crown to bestow were above the pretensions of a man, who not only descended from the royal line of Scottish kings, but was himself the head and representative of the dukes of Hamilton in male succession. It is unquestionable that the Abercorn branch of the Hamiltons sprang, by the men, from James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, regent of Scotland during the minority of the unfortunate Mary Stuart; while the ducal title has become vested in the family of Douglas, who

descend by females from the same common stock. When, however, as a further augmentation to so many dignities and distinctions conferred on this nobleman, the Garter was finally added by Pitt some years later, there were not wanting individuals who sought for the solution of such extraordinary acts of predilection or friendship by recourse to more concealed causes.

They observed that Lord Abercorn's landed property was immense; while the first minister laboured under pecuniary embarrassments, resulting not only from his slender patrimonial fortune, but increased by a want of private economy. Rendering ample justice to the native dignity and disinterestedness of Pitt's character, exemplified by so many shining proofs of those virtues as he had exhibited during his administration; they nevertheless asked, whether it was wholly incredible that a first lord of the treasury, whose wants were notoriously so pressing that he could neither pay the tax-gatherer, nor the butcher, when they came to his door, and whose ordinary resource for getting rid of his coachmaker's importunities was by ordering a new carriage, should permit a friend to furnish him with the means of meeting his difficulties, by forcing on him a loan of some thousand pounds. I am well aware of the indignation which the zealous adherents of Pitt will express at the bare supposition; but a belief in the marquis's having

assisted him with pecuniary aid was by no means confined to the enemies of the first minister. Nor was Lord Abercorn the sole individual of my own time whose elevation has given rise to similar suspicions or opinions. Among the members of the house of commons whom I found there on my first entering it in 1780, was Mr. Robert Smith, one of the two representatives for Nottingham. Being at the head of a banking-house situate on the other side of Temple Bar, he then resided in Lombard Street. His character was without reproach, and his fortune ample; but he possessed no parliamentary talents. As he was again returned for the same town in 1784, and had early attached himself to Pitt, he was considered decidedly ministerial on all questions. Towards the year 1790, Mr. Smith removed his residence to the vicinity of St. James's, where he occupied a splendid house, looking into the Green Park. He still represented his native place, Nottingham; and adhering invariably to the minister, was raised in 1796, to the Irish peerage, by the title of Lord Carrington. Scarcely fifteen months afterwards, Pitt placed him on the barons' bench in the British house of peers, by the same title; not, however, as was well known, without experiencing a long resistance on the part of the king. Throughout his whole reign, George the Third adopted as a fixed principle, that no individual engaged in trade, however ample might be his



nominal fortune, should be created a British peer. Nor do I believe that in the course of fifty years he infringed or violated this rule, except in the single instance before us. He was not so tenacious of the Irish peerage. In fact, on the same day when Mr. Smith had been raised to the latter dignity, another commercial member of the house of commons, Sir Joshua Vanneck, was created a baron of Ireland, by the title of Lord Huntingfield. Previous to the union with the sister kingdom in 1801, an Irish peerage, if conferred on an Englishman who possessed no landed property in that country, could be regarded as little more than an empty honour; producing indeed rank and consideration in society, but conferring no personal privilege; neither securing his person from arrest in Great Britain, nor even enabling the individual to frank a letter.

The dignity itself was frequently bestowed on very slight pretences. Sir Richard Philipps, a Welsh baronet of antient descent, when member for the county of Pembroke, in the year 1776, having preferred a request to his majesty, through the first minister, Lord North, for permission to make a carriage-road up to the front door of his house, which looked into St. James's Park, met with a refusal. The king, apprehensive that if he acceded to Sir Richard's desire, it would form a precedent for many similar applications, put a negative on it: but Lord North, in delivering the answer,

softened it by adding, that if he wished to be created an Irish peer, no difficulty would be experienced. This honour being thus tendered him, he accepted it, and was made a baron of that kingdom, by the title of Lord Milford. His intimate friend, and mine, the late Sir John Stepney, related this fact to me, not long after it took place.

To return to Mr. Smith;—I believe that he claimed a collateral alliance with the family of the same name, one of whom was ennobled by Charles the First; under the title of Carrington; an English barony which expired under Queen Anne, early in the last century. Whether the fact be so or not, I have been told that Pitt intended to raise his friend a step higher in the *Red Book*; and that when his administration suddenly terminated in 1801, Lord Carrington was on the point of being created Viscount Wendover. Several years earlier, on Pitt's becoming lord warden of the Cinque Ports, he had conferred on Lord Carrington the government of Deal Castle, situate in the immediate vicinity of his own residence at Walmer. Such reiterated marks of more than common ministerial friendship, bestowed on a private member of parliament, however respectable he might be, were by many imputed to a sentiment of gratitude in return for pecuniary assistance received from Mr. Smith, who, as a banker, might find many occasions of obliging the first lord of the treasury. I can neither assert nor deny the

fact: but if we reflect how distressed Pitt was throughout his whole life, and how large a sum he owed at his decease, we shall not perhaps consider it as improbable, that even *his* elevated mind might so far bend to circumstances, as to permit his friends, from their abundant resources, to contribute to his temporary accommodation or extrication. It is much more difficult to justify the patent granted to Miss Cecil Hamilton, giving her the rank of an earl's daughter, than it is to approve the British peerage conferred on Mr. Smith. I now resume the course of public affairs.

*24th May.*—Lord Surrey rising first, in the debate that followed Mr. Hamilton's motion for an address of thanks to the king, on his speech from the throne; in a tone and with a manner more subdued than he was accustomed to adopt during the last parliament, or than was natural to him, deprecated a division. "If," he said, "the new minister would only consent to omit the clause which thanked the sovereign for dissolving the late house of commons, unanimity might be obtained at the opening of the session."

Lord North, while warning Pitt to beware of the mutability of ministerial greatness, reminded him that in October 1780, when a new parliament met, in which assembly he himself occupied the post now filled by Pitt, the opposition of that day scarcely outnumbered the votes of the minority on the debate respecting the high bailiff



of Westminster; "and yet," added he, "within eighteen months afterwards I was compelled to quit my high situation."

Fox, in more impassioned language, exhorted the first lord of the treasury not to add insult to victory; and avowing the late rejected "East India Bill" as his own measure, entered briefly on its defence. Nor did he fail to charge the minister with violating the promise made from the throne, when, in contradiction to that solemn assurance given by his own authority, he had dissolved the late parliament. — But Pitt, confident in the strength of his numbers, while he was sustained equally by the crown and by the country, remained as insensible to threats, as to blandishments. Disdaining, he said, a hollow unanimity, he refused to omit a word of the proposed address. With ironical commendations on Fox's firmness in attempting to justify the "East India Bill," he maintained that the nation had sate in judgment upon that measure, and on its authors, whom they had pronounced guilty of rapacity and criminal ambition. Alluding to Fox's recent success in Covent-garden, he denied that it exhibited a test of public opinion, as it had been eminently produced by the interference of female charms, which superseded every other consideration: thus indirectly naming the duchess his auxiliary. Pitt concluded by sarcastically congratulating the head of opposition on the extent

of his fame, which spreading to the remotest corner of Great Britain, had procured his election for the Orkney and Shetland Islands.

To an harangue so personal, Fox made no reply; and the division immediately taking place, administration displayed a majority of one hundred and sixty-eight, in a house where near four hundred members were present; the respective numbers being 282 and 114.

As the first political division in the newly-elected assembly, it must have been most grateful to the minister, who beheld his power established on so firm a foundation: but it likewise exhibited to him a proof how differently the house felt respecting other points, where the British constitution, or the chartered rights of the subject, were invaded. On the same evening, a few hours earlier, Pitt could only carry the previous question against Lee by ninety-seven votes, when a motion was made that "the high bailiff of Westminster ought to have returned two members for that city." It would have been honourable no less to the judgment than to the feelings of the administration, if they had conceded to this sentiment so strongly pronounced: but party spirit is incapable of magnanimity, of moderation, or even of equity.

*25th May — 7th. June* — Instead of bringing forward without delay all those legislative and financial measures which the critical state of the

country, and the advanced season of the year, naturally demanded from a new parliament,—instead of endeavouring, as far as possible, to redeem the time that had been sacrificed since the preceding month of November, during which period all the wheels of government had stood nearly still in every department,—instead of allowing Fox to take his seat for Westminster, as sound policy, even without any mixture of liberality, would have dictated, leaving to Sir Cecil Wray the task of proving before a committee of the house, if he should be able, his own superiority of good and legal votes,—instead of this dignified and impartial line of proceeding; narrow and vindictive counsels were adopted in the cabinet. It was determined, at whatever risk or price, to prevent Fox from taking his seat for the city that had elected him, and to render every other public object subservient to his exclusion. All the little passions of human nature were called into action, in order to oppress a formidable and illustrious individual. I am sensible that in passing this censure on Mr. Pitt's conduct towards his rival, I condemn myself, since I supported, and voted with him on every question relative to the Westminster election: but, in writing these Memoirs, I acknowledge no guide except truth, and shall never hesitate to applaud, or to condemn any transaction from personal considerations. Nor, indeed, does it follow that the



acts which we contemplate with regret, or with concern, in 1817, must have excited those emotions in 1784, when they were viewed through the medium of political irritation.

Throughout the first fortnight which followed the address of thanks to the crown, all national business was postponed and swallowed up in the consideration of the Westminster election, or rather, scrutiny. During the course of nearly fourteen years that I sate in parliament, I never assisted at debates so tedious, so verbose, and so protracted! — circumstances which will excite less surprise, when we consider that legal interpretations, examinations at the bar, harangues of counsel, and technical illustrations or discussions relative to the intention of the statutes regulating elections, constituted the greater part of the entertainment. The house not unfrequently remained sitting till a very late hour of the night; sometimes till six on the ensuing morning, while the gentlemen of the long robe maintained the dispute with equal pertinacity. Fox demanded that a return should be made for Westminster, that he should be seated, and that the petition of Sir Cecil Wray might be tried by the regulations of the “Grenville Bill,” which would decide on the merits of the case.

The first minister, it must be owned, on this occasion adopted the resentment of the court, and became an active instrument of persecution.

Perhaps I may feel it more sensibly, and express my disapprobation in warmer language, from having myself been an object of royal and ministerial enmity. It cannot, however, be denied by Pitt's greatest admirers, that the measures which he adopted, in order to exclude Fox from taking his seat for Westminster, are to be ranked among the least commendable, or even justifiable, acts of his long administration.

Neither the attorney-general, nor the solicitor-general, took the prominent part in the debates upon this subject, which, from their legal eminence and official situations, might naturally have been expected. Of the former law-officer I have already made some mention, in the "Memoirs of my own Time" already published. He unquestionably did not want either professional or parliamentary talents; though, had they been unaided by Pitt's determined partiality, they never would, in all probability, have raised him to the highest dignities of the long robe, nor, still less, have placed him in the house of peers.

Yet, moderate as were Pepper Arden's abilities when compared with the great luminaries of the bar in our time, they exceeded those of Macdonald, the solicitor-general; of whose jurisprudential knowledge or acquirements "The Rolliad" has thus sarcastically expressed its opinion:

"Learn'd as Macdonald in his country's laws."

He possessed, however, other advantages. Sprung from one of the most ancient, opulent, and honourable Hebridian families, allied to some of the greatest nobility of England, as well as of Scotland; his elder brother, the feudal representative of the Macdonalds of the Isle of Skye, had been created a baron of Ireland, only a few years earlier, by Lord North. Nor, while speaking of the two younger, ought I to omit some mention of the first of the three brothers, Sir James Macdonald, who died in the prime of youth, at Rome, early in the present reign. No man in my time excited higher expectations of his future eminence in all the attainments of elegant literature. No individual since Mr. Edward King, who perished at nearly the same period of life, in 1637, (the "Lycidas" of Milton, swallowed up in the waves of the Irish Channel,) was more bewailed by men of genius, for his premature end! Perhaps, however, the marriage of Macdonald with the lord president of the council's eldest daughter, Lady Louisa Gower, might contribute, more than all the circumstances above enumerated, to place him in so conspicuous an office as that of solicitor-general, under the new administration.

To Kenyon, in an especial manner, was committed by Pitt the arduous task of defending the high bailiff of Westminster, justifying the scrutiny instituted by that returning officer, and preventing Fox from enjoying the solid fruits of his



late hard-earned triumph. So invidious a commission could not have been delegated to a more able head, or executed with more legal skill. Kenyon,—on whom the employment of master of the rolls had been recently conferred, and who, propelled by Lord Thurlow's friendship, while he was sustained by his own great abilities, beheld in full prospect higher honours, as soon as the Earl of Mansfield should quit the Court of King's Bench, which event his age and augmenting infirmities rendered apparently imminent,—endeavoured to convince the house that Corbett had acted conformably to law in declining to make any return.

But no individual member took a more conspicuous share in the debates which arose upon this question than Lord Mulgrave. Speaking from the treasury-bench, moored in one of the best ministerial anchorage-grounds, at the Pay-office in Whitehall, the emoluments of which lucrative post he shared jointly with Mr. William Grenville, he looked forward to greater objects than prize-money, or naval distinctions in the line of his profession. Sustained by two younger brothers, both of whom possessed likewise seats in parliament, and who were not less devotedly attached than himself to the minister; he anticipated with confidence the British peerage as the sure reward of his exertions, which, if not brilliant or splendid, were at least systematic and

unwearied. But having, in the course of his various attempts to justify the high bailiff, asserted, somewhat rashly, that "base and shuffling tricks had been practised during the poll, with a view to ensnare or entrap that officer," Fox, who felt the inevitable application of those expressions to himself, took up the subject in such a manner as effectually to prevent their repetition. I scarcely recollect having ever seen him more strongly agitated. With equal solemnity of voice and demeanour, addressing his discourse to Lord Mulgrave, he declared that, "If the words just used were meant to apply personally to himself, before any evidence was heard to authenticate or prove them, the noble lord held a language which no man fit to be admitted into the company of gentlemen ought to use, and of which every man of honour would be ashamed."

The reproof produced an instant explanation, accompanied with assurances that not the most distant intention existed of connecting the accusation with himself. But the promptitude that Fox always exhibited in resenting and repelling every attack which touched his honour, when contrasted with the frank amenity of his manners, and the recognized placability of his natural disposition, rendered him an object of respect, even to his political enemies. Lord Mulgrave continued, indeed, to maintain throughout the subsequent discussions respecting the poll, and the

election, that "tricks" had been used on the part of Fox's friends; omitting, however, the offensive epithets which had preceded the accusation on the former evening.

A more vociferous and entertaining, if not a more able advocate for the high bailiff, came forward in the person of Lord Mahon. This eccentric nobleman, who, as Earl Stanhope, has acted a conspicuous as well as a very useful part in the discussions of the house of peers during a long period of time, and whose recent death may, in my opinion, be considered as a public misfortune, was brought up by his father principally at Geneva. He had there imbibed very strong republican, or rather, levelling principles; ill adapted to a man whose high birth and prospects should naturally have inspired him with sentiments more favourable to monarchy. If he had flourished a century and a half earlier, under Charles the First, instead of under George the Third, he would unquestionably have rivalled Ludlow, or Algernon Sydney, in their attachment to a commonwealth. His person was tall and thin, his countenance expressive of ardour and impetuosity, as were all his movements. Over his whole figure, and even his dress, an air of puritanism reminded the beholder of the sectaries under Cromwell, rather than a young man of quality in an age of refinement and elegance. He possessed stentorian lungs and a powerful voice, always accompanied with



violent gesticulation. "The Rolliad" describes him as

"Mahon, outroaring torrents in their course."

So strongly did he always enforce his arguments by his gestures, as to become indeed sometimes a troublesome neighbour, when greatly animated by his subject. He commonly spoke from the row behind the treasury-bench. In the course of one of his harangues, respecting a measure that he had himself suggested, the object of which was the suppression of smuggling; impelled by the warmth of his feelings, just as he was commending his friend and relation, the first minister, for "his endeavours to knock smuggling on the head at one blow," he actually dealt Mr. Pitt, who sat below him, a smart stroke on the head. This manual application of his metaphor convulsed the house with laughter, and not a little surprized the chancellor of the exchequer; but it seemed neither to disconcert, nor to arrest, the impetuosity of Lord Mahon's eloquence. Since the ludicrous circumstance of Lord North's taking off Welbore Ellis's wig on the chafe of his scabbard, no scene more comic had been acted within the walls of the house of commons. The same satirical production which I before cited, when alluding to Lord Mahon, says,

"This Quixote of the nation  
Beats his own windmills in gesticulation.  
To *strike*, not *please*, his utmost force he bends,  
And all his sense is at his *fingers' ends*."

Scarcely any individual took so active a part against Fox on the hustings, during the progress of the poll, as Lord Mahon had done, and few surpassed him in zeal for the administration. To Pitt he was doubly allied, having first married his sister, Lady Hester, whose second daughter of the same name has been proclaimed Queen of Palmyra by some Arab tribes. His second wife, one of the minister's nearest relatives, was a daughter of Mr. Henry Grenville.

Nor did Fox want powerful supporters throughout the long discussions relative to his election; among whom Lord North and Sheridan appeared most conspicuous: but no member of opposition attracted so much attention, or, more properly to speak, excited so much animadversion, as Erskine. Though not possessed of a seat in the new parliament, yet being employed in the capacity of an advocate, he exerted every faculty of his powerful mind, when pleading the cause of his friend, at the bar of the house. During the examination of Grojan the deputy-bailiff, who was likewise the legal adviser of Corbett, a curious incident arose, which for a short time interrupted the proceedings. I shall briefly state the particulars.

Grojan having asserted that Fox's agents were acquainted with the lists of bad votes polled for him, Erskine desired to be informed how, or by what proofs, it was pretended to ascertain that



the persons in question were actually agents of Fox? The witness replying, that "he so inferred, because they appeared as his friends;" Erskine, with his characteristic promptitude and audacity, wholly regardless of any respect for the assembly before whom he spoke, observed that, "if all Fox's friends were to be considered as his agents, almost every honest man throughout the country might be so esteemed, who was not a member of that house." An insinuation so injurious, as well as insulting, produced general indignation among the ministerial ranks; and Sir James Johnstone rising in his place, demanded whether counsel was to be allowed thus to abuse and vilify the house, under pretence of examining a witness placed at their bar? Sir James, the elder brother of Sir William Pulteney, and of Governor Johnstone, realized our ideas of those hardy Scots, the companions of Wallace, or of Robert Bruce; cast as he was in a Herculean mould, of an uncouth aspect, rude address, and almost gigantic proportions. The counsel being ordered to withdraw, a short but acrimonious conversation ensued; Sir James, notwithstanding the efforts exerted from the opposition side of the house, with a view to compel him to desist from his charge, maintaining steadily that the individual who had offended should be called in, and made to repeat his words. Great blame was attributed to the Speaker, who, instead of repressing such disorderly language,



allowed it to pass unnoticed. Cornwall admitted that Erskine's conduct was improper and reprehensible; but excused himself for not interfering, by his not having heard the particular expression that gave offence. It seemed uncertain whether the house would have allowed the matter to rest here, if Pitt had not interposed to allay the warmth excited; observing with apparent suavity, though not unaccompanied by a degree of sarcasm, that "he imagined the counsel had no bad intention when he uttered the words; or perhaps it might form a part of his instructions, to act in the manner that had excited animadversion." The ministerial interposition proved effectual in quelling the irritation of the assembly. Fox judiciously remained silent, and Erskine being again summoned to the bar, the examination proceeded without further comment.

As I may not find any more appropriate occasion than this event offers, for speaking of a man who, during the last forty years, has so deservedly occupied so high a place in the public attention, and whom I have very particularly known at various periods of my life; I shall embrace it, in order to present to the reader of these Memoirs an imperfect portrait of Erskine. He forms, I believe, the only instance in our history, of an individual, who after having served in the army and the navy, both which services he quitted with discontent, has attained to the highest honours

and emoluments of the bar, to a prodigious professional reputation, and finally to the peerage. Bishop Burnet, when speaking of Pemberton, who was made chief justice of the King's Bench by Charles the Second, towards the end of his reign, adds : " His rise was so particular, that it is worth the being remembered. In his youth he mixed with such lewd company, that he quickly spent all he had, and ran so deep in debt, that he was quickly cast into a jail, where he lay many years. But he followed his studies so close in the jail, that he became one of the ablest men of his profession." There is, however, a wide interval between Pemberton's and Erskine's elevation. A combination of moral and physical qualities, which rarely meet in the same person, and which were finally crowned by fortune in defiance of probability, favoured Erskine. Descended from the royal line of Scottish kings, he may nevertheless be accounted an Englishman, if an uninterrupted residence of almost half a century in this country, and a total absence during that time from the soil that gave him birth, can constitute a denizen of England. Dining in company with Lord Erskine, not long since, at the Honourable Robert Greville's, he assured me that he had never visited Scotland since the year 1769. Inheriting scarcely any patrimonial fortune ; disgusted alike with the naval and the military profession ; having imprudently married while very young ; and finding himself

encumbered with a numerous, augmenting family;—every incitement which could propel to exertion, operated on his mind. The bar, and the bar only, opened a field, which, if followed up with success, would infallibly conduct to fortune, and probably to dignity. But, how qualify himself, at the age of twenty-five or six, for such a career, at once dry, laborious, difficult, and uncertain? It required uncommon energies of character, severe application, and many renunciations, in order to acquire the jurisprudential knowledge necessary even for entering the lists. By steady and continued efforts, during the progress of which he sequestered himself for at least two years in a great degree from the dissipation of society, he surmounted those impediments, and presented himself on the arena of the law. Kettel's trial, which took place in consequence of the transactions of the 27th July, 1778, (a day not marked in our naval annals, like those of Camperdown, of Aboukir, or of Trafalgar, as a triumphant anniversary,) fortunately presented to Erskine an opportunity for rendering himself advantageously known to the public. The expectations excited by his talents, together with the nature of his recognized political opinions, having procured him to be retained on the side of the accused admiral; he displayed so happy a mixture of ability, eloquence, and spirit, as at once to establish his legal reputation. I



have heard him relate some of the particulars of that pleading, not very long after they took place; for no man was more easily induced to talk of himself and his own performances. Making, however, every allowance for the embellishments of self-love, or rather, of inordinate vanity, he unquestionably impressed his hearers with the highest respect and admiration. A fearless temper, approaching sometimes to temerity, yet usually under the restraint of judgment, enabled him to break through the shackles previously imposed on courts of law. Erskine successfully undertook to spurn at precedents; to strike out a new path to eminence; to appal or silence the judges themselves; to intimidate, convince, or seduce the juries; to appeal from the understanding to the feelings; to invoke religion in aid of reason; to cite Scripture whenever it suited his purposes; to oppose the Bible against Blackstone; finally, to lead captive his audience, and to carry the cause that he defended or espoused, by extorting a sort of involuntary submission, sometimes yielded almost in defiance of evidence, facts, belief, or conviction.

Whatever exaggeration may appear in this description, those persons who are best acquainted with the trials on which Erskine has distinguished himself, will not think the portrait overcharged. They will recollect the successful defence of Lord George Gordon, made by him in February 1781;

that equally celebrated pleading for the Dean of St. Asaph, Shipley, in 1784; the harangues which saved Stockdale, and the publisher of Paine's "Age of Reason;" finally, his efforts in favour of Horne Tooke, Hardy, and the revolutionists of the year 1794; together with so many other exertions of eloquence immortalized in the records of our criminal jurisprudence. Even the great luminaries of law, when arrayed in their ermine, and armed with all the official sanctity or majesty of their office, bent under his ascendancy, and seemed to be half subdued by his intelligence, or awed by his vehemence, pertinacity, and undaunted character. Buller, in whose office, before his promotion to the bench, Erskine had studied the rudiments of his profession,—a man of distinguished ability, though caricatured in the printshops of the capital, under the name of *Judge Thumb*, from an unfortunate declaration which he made relative to the powers of correction legally vested in the husband over the wife,—Buller, who, in 1784, was one of the inferior judges of the Court of King's Bench, but who long aspired, not without reason, to occupy the first place in that tribunal, found himself overpowered, on many occasions, by Erskine. The Earl of Mansfield himself, the oracle of Themis, before whom every created thing under the roof of Westminster Hall became dumb or submissive; unable, or reluctant, to impose silence

on one of his own countrymen, sprung like the Murrays from a noble stock, and shedding a lustre over the soil that alike gave them birth;—even *he* often seemed to shrink from the contest, and gave way to the impetuous inflexibility of an individual, who, though sometimes foiled, yet, like Antæus, derived strength from every fall. If Churchill very unjustly depicted Wedderburn as

“Mute at the bar, but in the senate loud,” the converse of the proposition, it was said, might apply to Erskine, as being “loud at the bar, but in the senate mute.” Not that, when a member of the house of commons, he commonly sate silent on great questions, as I can attest; and still less did he absent himself: though he unquestionably did not display within the walls of that assembly the overwhelming influence which distinguished him when pleading before a court of law. His genius, irresistible while professionally exerted, appeared to be rebuked under the majestic eloquence of Pitt.

In his person, Erskine combined great elegance of figure and manner. His movements were all rapid; appropriate to, and corresponding with, the texture of his mind. Intelligence flashed from his eyes; and his features, regular, prepossessing, as well as harmonious, bespoke him of no vulgar extraction. He was slender, finely proportioned, and of a just stature. The tones of his voice, though sharp, were full; destitute of any tinge



of Scottish accent, and adequate to every professional purpose or exigency. Far inferior in legal knowledge, not only to Kenyon, but to Scott, Mitford, and many other practitioners at the bar, he overleaped the fences that he could not open or remove ; brought forward auxiliaries unknown before to the coif ; ransacked authorities never dreamed of by his brethren ; quoted the Pentateuch, or the Proverbs, more frequently than Coke upon Littleton ; and bewildered or fascinated his hearers. From great defects and weaknesses he was not exempt. His vanity was obtrusive, and insatiable. Narcissus was not more enamoured of his person, than Erskine was of his talents ; nor contemplated his own image with more complacency, even in the most troubled fountain. Portraits of Erskine, as *Counsellor Ego*, were sold in the shops. His own speeches, actions, and importance, which seemed ever present to his mind, continually formed the theme of his discourse. How great therefore must have been his mortification, when, on being presented to Bonaparte in 1802, at Paris, the Corsican First Consul, instead of recognizing his extended fame, and beholding in him the future chancellor of Great Britain, only said, "*Etes vous légiste ?*" The truth of this anecdote rests with Fox's Irish biographer and panegyrist, Trotter ; but I see no reason to doubt it. Joseph Scaliger, when he was presented to Henry the Fourth of France, from

whom he anticipated the most flattering reception, underwent a similar, and a much coarser overthrow to his vanity and self-love. Erskine possessed, however, many elegant accomplishments, rarely found in the walks of the Temple, or of Lincoln's Inn; and not usually united by the most expanded mind, with the dry study of statutes and digests of law. He was a poet of no common order; and I have heard him repeat his own verses, with nearly as much delight as he felt, himself, in reciting them.

Among the charming women who, in 1784, adorned the court of Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, (or, more properly to speak, the English capital; for scarcely could the queen be said to have any court,) might well be accounted Lady Payne, now Lady Lavington; her husband, Sir Ralph Payne, having been subsequently created an Irish baron. A native of Vienna, Mademoiselle de Kelbel—so she was named before her marriage—then resided with the Princess Joseph Poniatowska, widow of one of his late Polish Majesty's brothers, who had been many years in the Austrian service, where he attained the rank of general. Her person and manners were full of grace. At Sir Ralph's house in Grafton-street, the leaders of opposition frequently met; and Erskine having one day dined there, found himself so indisposed as to be obliged to retire after dinner to another apartment. Lady Payne, who

was incessant in her attentions to him, enquired, when he returned to the company, how he found himself? Erskine took out a bit of paper, and wrote on it,

“ 'Tis true I am ill, but I cannot complain;  
For he never knew *Pleasure*, who never knew *Payne*.”

Sir Ralph, with whom I was well acquainted, always appeared to be a good-natured, pleasing, well-bred man. His *Star* rendered him, like Sir John Irwine, Sir William Gordon, Sir George Warren, and other Knights of the Bath of that period, a conspicuous as well as an ornamental member of the house of commons; but he was reported not always to treat his wife with kindness. Sheridan calling on her one morning, found her in tears, which she placed, however, to the account of her monkey, who had expired only an hour or two before, and for whose loss she expressed deep regret. “Pray write me an epitaph for him,” added she; “his name was *Ned*.” Sheridan instantly penned these lines:

“Alas! poor Ned  
My monkey's dead!  
I had rather by half  
It had been Sir Ralph.”

In his political attachments Erskine was ardent and impetuous, yet steady; devoted to Fox, whom he continued to follow through all the progress of the French revolution. Nor was he less warmly attached to the Prince of Wales,



whose attorney-general he had been appointed immediately after his royal highness set up his standard of opposition to the king on repairing to Carlton House. From that office, his defence of Tom Paine occasioned his dismissal; but it was only to re-appear subsequently in the more dignified character of chancellor to the heir apparent. Erskine's professional labours speedily expelled the demon of poverty from his dwelling; and no man seemed better to know the value of money,—for he appeared to have constantly before his eyes Juvenal's

*“Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat  
Res angusta domi.”*

He acquired, as he well deserved to do, a large fortune; but the modes to which he had recourse, and the Trans-Atlantic securities in which he invested his money, with a view, as he conceived, to its preservation, in case of a great national convulsion here at home,—precautions adopted by him during the revolutionary war,—neither did credit to his prudence, nor honour to his patriotism. Fortune, rather than his pre-eminent abilities, finally placed the great seal in his hand for a short time, and seated him in the upper house of parliament. If Pitt had survived eight months longer; or if, reversing the events, Fox had died in January, and Pitt in September of the same year, 1806; Erskine probably would have remained to the present day a commoner. But, on

the decease of the first minister, the remaining members of the cabinet, conscious of the awful crisis in which this country stood, after the deplorable humiliation of Austria in the campaign of 1805 under Mack, agreed in advising and exhorting the king to accept their resignation; calling, of course, Fox, Lords Grenville and Grey, to his counsels. The Duke of Montrose, who was one of that cabinet, assured me so himself, very soon after the event took place. When, however, the list of individuals selected as proper for filling the office of chancellor was delivered in to his majesty by the new ministers—at the head of which paper appeared Erskine's name; they were far from expecting, as one of the party declared to me, that the king would have acquiesced in the recommendation. George the Third made no objection; only observing to them, “Remember, he is *your* chancellor, not *mine* ;” and Erskine received the great seal, to the astonishment of his own political friends. The defender of Paine, and of Horne Tooke, could not be other than obnoxious to the king; who, if his choice had been wholly unfettered, would probably have named Piggott to the high office in question. Erskine might, in such case, never have sate upon the woolsack, nor have attained to the peerage; but his legal reputation would not have suffered by the exclusion: for he proved that an advocate of paramount abilities might

make a very inadequate chancellor. His decrees will not be ranked with those of Yorke, or of Scott; and scarcely with those of Bathurst.

It may, perhaps, be supposed, or assumed, that if Erskine had not attained to this dignity in 1806, he would have reached it six years later, in 1812; when the regent, being liberated from the restrictions imposed on him by parliament, could have followed his own inclination in the selection of ministers. I admit, that if the king had died in the autumn of 1810, or if the Prince of Wales had been instantly invested at that period with all the prerogatives of sovereignty, such an event might probably have taken place. But, during the interval of about fifteen months which elapsed between his majesty's last attack of mental alienation and his son's complete emancipation from all restraint, Lord Eldon had made a deep and favourable impression on the regent's mind, as well as on his affections. That nobleman, who to great legal talents, and a sound judgment, joins qualities of a more companionable description, is by no means averse to the conviviality of the table. Like the elder Cato, of whom Horace asserts that he frequently warmed his virtue by the stimulus of wine, Lord Eldon willingly indulges, within proper limits, in that gratification. Of him it may be justly said (as the same poet does of Corvinus Messala, when alluding to the "amphora," in his "O nata mecum,")



“Non ille, quanquam Socraticis madet  
Sermonibus, te negliget horridus.”

It can, therefore, excite no surprize if I state that Lord Erskine, though from long habits of intercourse he must have been more personally familiar with his royal highness than the present chancellor, does not occupy a higher place in his confidence. I know indeed, from good authority, that during the summer of 1815, Lord Eldon, finding himself attacked by infirmities and diseases which, as he apprehended, would or might disqualify him for fulfilling the laborious duties of his office, addressed a letter to the regent, requesting permission to resign his employment. In reply, the prince besought him to lay aside any such intention; and added, among other flattering expressions, that “he was the only man in the cabinet upon whom he (the regent) could repose with confidence.”

Lord Eldon complied with the royal wish; and some time afterwards, while dining with Lord Liverpool, having drunk at least a bottle of port wine, he pulled out the letter in question, and put it into the hands of the first lord of the treasury for his perusal. That minister, not a little wounded, as well as irritated, at the exclusive moral preference manifested towards the chancellor, hurried away next morning to Carlton House, and tendered his resignation. Surprized at so unexpected an event, his royal highness

requested to be informed of the motives that gave rise to it. Lord Liverpool replied by stating the nature of the written communication which Lord Eldon had shewn him under the prince's hand; adding, that "if confidence could be no longer reposed in him, it became him to retire from office."

The regent experienced, however, very little difficulty in calming this ebullition of ministerial resentment; and over another bottle he effected a pacification. In fact, the chancellor and Lord Sidmouth are the only two members of the present cabinet whose convivial temper sympathized with that of the prince.

Lord Erskine, verging, as he now is, rapidly towards his seventieth year, though in the full possession of all his mental, no less than of his bodily faculties, yet appears very unlikely to hold the great seal a second time. Decorated with the order of the Thistle, and long retired from the bar, he should rather be considered as a friend and a companion of the regent, than as any longer a candidate for the dignity of chancellor. I regard his legal and his political race as in fact terminated, though he may long continue to speak and vote in the house of peers. The elevated and generous spirit of independence which he displayed throughout the whole parliamentary proceedings instituted against the unhappy queen of George the Fourth, have covered Lord Erskine



with immortal honour ; and have stamped him in age, as he was in youth, the intrepid defender of oppressed or persecuted individuals. In order justly to appreciate his merit, we must recollect how ardent was his personal affection to the sovereign whose will he opposed. Only a paramount sense of moral duty, and a conscientious discharge of it, could have ever surmounted that strong attachment, cemented by so many years of service. To the queen he was altogether unknown. If such conduct does not entitle to admiration and applause, I am at a loss to know what can ensure it. Posterity will remunerate him.

*8th June.*—One of the most interesting debates at which I was ever present, took place when Welbore Ellis, with his characteristic formality, after a tedious speech, concluded by moving that “the high bailiff of Westminster be ordered forthwith to make return of two members.” Ellis himself, who had long toiled ineffectually in the ranks of opposition, was elevated to the British peerage, about ten years later, when near fourscore years of age ; thus receiving, like so many others, that dignity from the hand of Pitt which he found it vain to hope he ever could attain from Fox. It is difficult to convey an adequate idea of the oration—for such it might properly be deemed, as much as any of those attributed to Demosthenes or to Tully—which the last-mentioned illustrious but perse-



cuted member pronounced on this occasion. It comprised all that eloquence, sustained by a just cause, could combine to persuade and to gain over his judges: but, however brilliant might be the matter, it wanted prudence in its conception, and brevity in its delivery. After pointedly answering, *seriatim*, Lord Mulgrave, the Master of the Rolls, and Lord Mahon; against each of whom he protested, not without reason, as prejudiced individuals unfit to vote upon such a question; he addressed himself personally to Pitt. In animated language he exhorted the new first minister not to become an instrument of oppression in the hands of others; thereby forming a precedent, which, while it disgraced the house of commons, would infallibly open the eyes of all moderate men throughout the nation. Treating with derision the pretended scruples of Corbett, the high bailiff, as being inspired, not by conscience, nor by justice, but as a low contrivance of his own ministerial enemies, with a view to prevent his being returned member for Westminster; he again demanded that the validity of his election should be referred to a committee appointed under "the Grenville Bill." With impassioned declamation he owned and lamented his own poverty, which imposing on his friends the necessity of defraying from their private purses the enormous expences of an interminable scrutiny, wounded his feelings in the deepest manner. Never, he said, till the present

occasion, did he languish for affluence, or deplore his incapacity to maintain with his own fortune his own right ! Then, with consummate imprudence, but in words of great energy, he directed his whole artillery against the secret advisers of the measure. Against the sovereign himself, whom, without violating the forms of the house, he designated in very intelligible terms, and whose sacred name, he said, had been prostituted in the most shameless manner, during the progress of the election, to the subversion of all decency or law ; he levelled his severest observations. Nor did he allow Jenkinson to escape under the veil of silence, obscurity, and retirement, beneath which he attempted or affected to shelter himself since Pitt's entrance on office.

Assuming as a fact, that the new minister was only the ostensible author of those measures which he did not direct, and could not control ; an accusation which, it must be admitted, was wholly destitute of proof, and, as I believe, of truth ; Fox exclaimed, “ I am far from attributing to the chancellor of the exchequer the guilt of being a voluntary instrument in this vile affair. He is not, I am well aware, a free agent. Not, therefore, to *him*, but to its true authors, do I impute the act ; to that obstinate, dark, and short-sighted spirit, which, like a species of infatuation, pervades, as it has uniformly guided and overshadowed, the councils of this unfortunate country,

throughout the whole progress of *the present disgraceful and calamitous reign*. I attribute it to that weak, that ruinous and damnable system, which has produced all our miseries, and all our misfortunes, in every quarter of the globe; to *those secret advisers* of the crown, whose rancour is only surpassed by their cruelty; and whose malignant nature impels them to pursue with insatiate revenge the object of their enmity." When we maturely weigh the import of these expressions, and consider how deep a stain they affix on the person whom they describe; we cannot wonder that the individual who used them should have remained two-and-twenty years excluded from the councils of the sovereign whom he thus accused. Fox, by allowing his indignation to overpower his discretion, in fact confirmed his rival in office, while he closed the doors of employment on himself. How could George the Third voluntarily admit into his cabinet a man who had so pointedly held him up to the condemnation of his own subjects? If Fox had changed the nature of his attack, and transferred his accusations exclusively to the minister, opportunities might and would have arisen for facilitating his return to power. It is true that the first Earl of Chatham, while he still remained a commoner, had made use of similar language; but that great statesman spoke from higher ground than Fox, and with more



effect, after having triumphed, in the eyes of all Europe, over the united power of the house of Bourbon. Nor did even *his* example hold out any encouragement to such a denunciation of the king; since, after his resignation in 1761, during the course of seventeen years that Lord Chatham survived, he was scarcely all together a single year in office.

Jenkinson was present during the whole of this severe philippic; but he possessed too much command over his passions to notice Fox's insinuations. With consummate judgment, he had withdrawn himself as much as possible from the public eye, and waited in silence for his future reward. Far from taking as yet any ostensible part or place in the new administration, he avoided at this time ever approaching the treasury bench; mixed personally in none of the debates; but, modestly seating himself at a distance, on the opposition side, towards the lower part of the house, he seemed studiously to shun observation. Presumptive heir, as he was, to the title and estate of Sir Banks Jenkinson, he had likewise unquestionably secured the promise of a British peerage, as soon as circumstances should enable the sovereign and his minister to bestow on him that dignity, without exciting too much animadversion. Even his name was not to be found at this time in the Court Calendar, connected with any English office. So supple, cau-

tious, and patient was he; and by such unmarked steps did he advance as it were in the dark, *feeling* his way up to the house of lords! Neither did Pitt, in his reply, condescend to notice, or to refute, the assertion made of his being, himself, only a puppet agitated by unseen wires; though he retorted on his adversary every accusation calculated to render him an object of national reprobation. With contemptuous irony he observed, that Lord North and Fox had not during many years agreed on any political question, except in their decision upon the memorable Middlesex election, which seated Colonel Luttrell in the house; a decision now so generally condemned: and next, in their condemnation of "the Grenville Bill;" a bill now so universally applauded. Fox's early employment under Lord North's administration, followed by his subsequent opposition to that minister, and terminating in their coalition, necessarily subjected him to comments on his parliamentary inconsistency or contradictions.

The motion of Welbore Ellis was negatived by *seventy-eight*, after a debate protracted to a late hour. Yet even in this triumph the minister might find ground for mortification; and he must have involuntarily felt how languid or reluctant was the support extended to him on the present question, compared with the vast majority that carried the address to the crown, at the opening of

the session. The opposition could only produce on that occasion 114 votes ; while 117 divided for compelling the high bailiff to make a return to the precept. On the other hand, though 282 members voted with administration, when they were called on to manifest their loyalty to the sovereign, and their confidence in the government ; 195 could with difficulty be found to carry a question of personal oppression. So strong was the moral sense of right and wrong, even in an assembly convoked under the warmest impressions of partiality towards the minister, and of corresponding condemnation for the *coalition* ! Availing himself of his numerical superiority, conscious of the invidious nature of the question, and desirous, if possible, to terminate a contest which, as he well knew, violated the principles of justice ; Pitt lost not a moment in moving that “ the high bailiff do proceed in the scrutiny with all practicable dispatch.” The motion was carried ; and Corbett, being called to the bar, received from the Speaker’s mouth information of the decision of the house. Thus may be said to have finished the first act of a political farce, in which, though Fox was overborne by numbers, the minister could derive little gratification from his victory. Public opinion amply indemnified the vanquished representative for Westminster. During other periods of the present reign, when the tide ran with less impetuosity in



favour of the sovereign, and of administration, so oppressive an exertion of power against an individual might even have produced consequences most injurious to the government. But the unpopularity of the *coalition*, aggravated by the general condemnation which "the East India Bill" had excited throughout the country, supplied every deficiency of substantial justice, and sustained the new chancellor of the exchequer in his elevation.

9th—16th June. — The Westminster election being now dismissed for some months, the real business of the session commenced ; but Burke first rang the knell of the departed house of commons, at which ceremony he performed the part of chief mourner. In a "Representation," as he denominated it, the reading of which at the table, however incredible it may seem, consumed more than three hours, he endeavoured to demonstrate that ministers had calumniated Fox's late measure ; while, impelled by motives of personal ambition, they had advised the dissolution of an assembly which they could neither persuade nor corrupt. Every assertion contained in Burke's *motion* constituting the severest satire both on the sovereign and on his ministers, it received an immediate negative, without producing answer or debate of any kind ; the mover's only object being to commemorate his opinions, and thus to transmit them to posterity, embodied in the journals of the house.

A discussion of a very different nature followed, two days later, when Sawbridge revived the important subject, already twice agitated during the existence of the late parliament, for amending the national representation. Its introduction placed the first minister in a position of some delicacy, since he was now called on to prove the sincerity of his speeches and professions when out of office. Sawbridge refusing to postpone his *motion*, which was "for appointing a committee to enquire into the present state of the representation of the commons;" being literally the very proposition recommended by Pitt in 1782, from the treasury bench; and all eyes being directed towards him, he was compelled to rise.

While, in the progress of his speech, he continued to profess the same ardour in the cause as he had always felt; he maintained, though without assigning any specific reasons for his opinion, that "it was out of season at this juncture." He did not, however, fail to pledge himself in words the most solemn, to bring forward the subject, as early as it might be possible, in the ensuing session; protesting his sincerity in effecting the object of national reform. These assurances of future support, combined as they were with such a reluctance to agitate the question immediately, did not escape Fox's observation; who, though he affected not to distrust the minister's declarations, demanded to be in-

formed what causes constituted the particular inaptitude of the present moment. But, no reply nor explanation being given from the treasury bench, Sawbridge declared that, under such reserve, he should persist in his *motion*. He was a stern republican in his principles, almost hideous in his aspect, which always reminded me of Tiberius, as drawn by Tacitus; of a coarse figure, and still coarser manners; but possessing an ample fortune, and a strong understanding. Nor did he want qualifications adapted to social life, being indisputably the greatest proficient at the game of whist who was then to be found among the clubs in St. James's-street. Since the decease of Beckford, so famous for his opposition to the crown in the beginning of the present reign; and of Crosby, who was committed to the Tower by the house of commons; no individual in our time, that had filled the post of lord mayor, if we except Wilkes, attained to greater popularity than Sawbridge, previous to the existence of the *coalition*.

A very interesting debate ensued, in which Sir Richard Hill took a conspicuous part. Representing, as he did, a great county (Shropshire), where he inherited a large estate, he was heard with respect whenever he addressed the house. Warmly attached to Pitt, he had imbibed very deep prejudices against the *coalition*; and in his sarcastic or satirical animadversions on Fox, it



must be confessed that he frequently transgressed the limits of strict decorum, if he did not trespass on the regulations of debate. With Holy Writ he was very familiar; and as he pressed the Bible constantly into his service, while speaking on political subjects,—not always with the gravity that such a book seemed to demand,—the “*Rolliad*” held him up conspicuously to ridicule, as the “*Scriptural Killigrew*.” Professing himself a friend to parliamentary reform, he nevertheless coincided with the first minister in wishing to postpone the consideration of so important a question to a more propitious moment; and in the course of his speech, which he delivered from the treasury bench, he declaimed with great asperity on the American war, as well as personally on Lord North, under whose administration a contest so ill conducted and unfortunate took place. That nobleman, thus attacked, stood up; and after combating with arguments drawn from experience, history, and reason, the specious plans of reform, to all which he professed himself a determined enemy, as substituting delusive theory in the place of great and acknowledged, though imperfect, benefit; he adverted to the hostilities with America. Far from deprecating the agitation of the subject, he demanded it; denied that he had caused the calamities so eloquently depicted, and called on his accusers to bring forward a charge against him. “*I found,*” said he,

“the American war when I became minister: I did not create it. On the contrary, it was the war of the country, of parliament, and approved by the people. But, if the gentlemen opposite think otherwise, let them come forward and accuse me. I shall not shrink. I am ready to meet, and to repel their charge. Nay, I demand it, as a matter of justice. There can exist no reason *now* for withholding it. I am wholly unprotected. The minister of the day has a house of commons to accuse me, a house of peers to try me; he is master of all the written evidence that exists against me. And as to parole testimony,” continued he, fixing his eyes upon Dundas, “almost all those individuals who were *my* confidential friends, in whom I reposed my secrets, are now become *his* friends. Yet I court the enquiry: but if, when thus called on, they do not grant it, I must insist that they do not henceforward argue upon the charge as if it were proved.”

So manly and peremptory a challenge, while it imposed silence on his accusers,—for not a word of reply proceeded from any member of administration,—produced expressions of admiration at the ability, as well as the firmness, which it displayed.

Pitt, though only three years earlier he had harangued with vehemence against the ministerial conductors of that war, and had even invoked the divine vengeance on their heads, yet remained

mute. He unquestionably felt that a parliamentary prosecution of the minister who carried on that contest must involve in the culpability imputed, the sovereign at the head of whose counsels he now actually presided. In fact, George the Third could no more have abandoned Lord North to the rage of his enemies, than Charles the First ought to have consented to the execution of Lord Strafford. Both ministers were equally the agents of the royal will, and both were alike entitled to protection from the prince whom they obeyed, if not constitutionally, according to the principles laid down at the revolution of 1688, yet in a moral and individual sense. On the other hand, Fox and Burke, who had now implicated themselves with the very minister whose measures and policy had so long constituted the theme of their invectives, could not draw out in hostile array for his destruction. Such were the causes that extended a veil over the administration of Lord North, and consigned it to a wise oblivion.

From this period the American war seemed to be nearly forgotten, and to have passed into the province of history, like the "war of the Succession," or the "war of Seven Years." Allusion was indeed occasionally made to it; but it no more constituted, as it had done during so many sessions, the perpetual weapon of declamation; while the nobleman who had conducted it, though he never again came forward in an official character,



yet passed the remainder of his life in dignified repose, surrounded by admiring friends, in the bosom of his family. I have seen him often during that period, in his own drawing-room in Grosvenor-square. There, of evenings, with Gibbon by his side, who formed a frequent guest during his visits to England from Lausanne; Lord North, blind and infirm, displayed not only insuperable suavity of temper, but disclosed the stores of a classic mind, wit, and variety of the most interesting information. Pope, when speaking of Sir Robert Walpole after his retreat from public life, says,

“ I shun his zenith, court his mild decline.”

But the Earl of Orford, when no longer first minister, by no means either possessed the same intellectual resources, or exhibited the same domestic virtues, as his successor in office under the present reign.

Sawbridge pertinaciously refusing to postpone, or to withdraw his *motion*, Lord Mulgrave moved “ the previous question ;” a manœuvre of which Sawbridge loudly complained, as an unfair expedient for getting rid of the proposition, without giving it a decided negative. After a debate of considerable length, on coming to a division, the numbers were only 125 for appointing a committee, while 199 supported Lord Mulgrave; thus rejecting the first proposed step towards reform, by a majority of seventy-four votes. If

ever the proposition could have met with success, it would have been adopted in 1782, when Pitt agitated it under the Rockingham administration. Every circumstance then conspired to favour its introduction : ministers deeply pledged to reform, who had already carried retrenchment into almost all the departments of the royal household or expenditure ; a house of commons left without a leader, disbanded, and in which assembly numbers were inclined to support any measure that promised extrication from the state of distress into which the nation was plunged by the American war ; a country humiliated, drained, discontented, and calling for redress ; lastly, a sovereign fettered, disarmed, and incapable of opposing any effectual resistance to the measure. In fact, a majority of only *twenty* then negatived the motion ; so that *eleven* individuals, by changing sides, might have carried it, and opened wide the door to future changes in the constitution. It must likewise be remembered, that in May 1782, Lord North, who had only been driven from employment a few weeks, took no active part in opposing the proposition. He was present indeed, and voted against it ; but, as if stunned by the late political events, to the surprize of his friends, he did not open his lips. Nor ought we to forget, that at the moment when Pitt addressed the house, we had reached the lowest point of national depression to which we

sunk, just previous to the intelligence of Rodney's great naval victory over De Grasse. When a similar experiment was reiterated in the ensuing session, by the same person, its result was widely different. The house had already recovered from its apathy, and shaken off its deference or submission to reformers, however plausible their systems might appear in theory, when decorated with the charms of eloquence. Lord North amply compensated for his silence in 1782, by his active exertions, and powerful opposition in 1783. On the first of those occasions the attendance scarcely exceeded three hundred; while on the second nearly four hundred and fifty members voted. Yet no more than one hundred and forty-nine persons were found to support the *motion*; among whom the names of Thomas Pitt and of Henry Dundas, however respectable they might be individually, served only to excite ridicule. So soon had the cry for parliamentary reform subsided; and such was the operation of time on the minds of men, in preventing them from the hasty adoption of projects for ameliorating the national representation!

30th June.—The month of June already drew to its close before the new minister brought forward his measures of finance to meet the exigencies of the year; or, in parliamentary language, "opened the budget." He performed this arduous task in a manner at once so voluminous,



accurate, and masterly, as to excite universal admiration: a sentiment which received no small augmentation, if we reflect that he had then only just completed his twenty-fifth year. Pitt may, indeed, be regarded as a political phenomenon, not likely to recur in the lapse of many ages; unless we should incline to consider Lord Henry Petty, (now Marquis of Lansdown,) who in 1806, as chancellor of the exchequer, executed the same ministerial function, to form any sort of parallel. Pitt's youth furnished opposition for a long time with a fertile theme of ridicule and comment. "The Rolliad," describing him in 1784, exclaims:

"Above the rest, majestically great,  
Behold the infant Atlas of the state,  
The matchless miracle of modern days;  
In whom Britannia to the world displays  
A sight to make surrounding nations stare;  
A kingdom trusted to a schoolboy's care!"

Early in July, this "schoolboy" introduced his "East India Bill;" and nearly the whole month was consumed in the discussions or alterations to which it gave rise. The measure unquestionably could not be charged with the same imputations of personal ambition, rapacity, and confiscation which Fox's *bill* had occasioned: the consent of the directors to its introduction, and afterwards of the proprietors, being obtained; the political power antecedently vested in both

which bodies of men, though diminished and restricted, was by no means annihilated. Indeed, from its first introduction, down to the time of its finally passing the house of commons, concession and conciliation appeared to animate the minister, who modulated, expunged, or altered, numerous clauses and regulations. Some of these substitutions were suggested by his own friends or supporters; but the far greater part emanated from the ranks of opposition. Important as the subject was in itself, and still more important as it must prove in its operation or consequences, it neither excited the interest, nor produced the attendance, which had distinguished the former "East India Bill." The advanced season of the year, and the overwhelming majorities which administration commanded on every division, greatly diminished the exertions of mutual hostility. Fox, it is true, while he justified his own *bill*, attacked the minister's proposition with the strongest weapons of reason and argument. Sheridan transfixed it with the keenest shafts of ridicule, and Burke thundered against it with no less indignation than Demosthenes inveighed against Philip. On the other hand, Jenkinson, emerging from the sort of obscurity in which he had attempted or affected to remain ever since the commencement of the session, now came forward for the first time, and from the ministerial side of the house



extended his active support, or, as the opposition denominated it, his *sanction* to the measure.

2nd—28th July.—“ I am charged,” said Fox, “ with erecting a fourth estate in the legislature, by my *bill* for the government of India. But, did it, in fact, erect any estate that was not previously in existence? The Court of Directors was the fourth estate; and my bill only altered the nature of that estate, from one without efficacy, delusive, and destitute of control, to a power constantly under check, and removable by address from either house of parliament.” — “ I admit that I took the *commerce*, as well as the *government* of India; for doing which I was traduced throughout the country. But, what is the measure of the present minister? The new India Board that he proposes to erect, may send instructions to India in *commercial*, as well as in *political* matters, where they think the revenue to be concerned. Oh! but, says he, the company may appeal. Appeal!—To whom, and from whom? Is such a pretended appeal anything except a fallacy and a farce? Will the company appeal from the chancellor of the exchequer, and one of the secretaries of state, to the king in council? And will not the king take the opinions of those ministers? Or does the bill mean to insinuate that the company may appeal from the ostensible cabinet, to the *secret junto*, who constitute the real government of the country?”



Sheridan exposed the measure to derision, as being not only drawn up in the most slovenly manner, but deficient in all the qualities that could entitle it to public attention or respect. Pitt, in order to manifest his candour, and the readiness with which he adopted every suggestion that might render the bill more salutary or palatable, having admitted twenty-one new clauses, which were severally distinguished by the letters of the alphabet, Sheridan seized on the circumstance, as affording ample matter for contemptuous comment. He entreated of some member to propose three more clauses, which, he said, were requisite in order to complete the ministerial *horn-book*. "The chancellor of the exchequer acts indeed wisely," added he, "in admitting that there exist good reasons for the alterations. If he looks round him, he will find reasons strong enough to make him desirous of conciliating those persons who, after having overturned one administration, are powerful enough to make *him* feel that he is a mere creature of their own formation, whom, as they have set up, so they may pull down at pleasure." The application of these insinuations, as well as of Fox's allusions, to the pretended influence of Jenkinson behind the throne, was too obvious to be mistaken by any person. Pitt did not, however, condescend to answer, or even to notice, such aspersions.

In language more indignant, Burke made the roof resound with his declamations against every part of the *bill*; which measure he consigned to the abhorrence of Europe and of Asia, as only framed for purposes of malversation, tyranny, and oppression. He reprobated the contumelious treatment which “the reports of the select committee,” where he himself most actively assisted as a member, had recently undergone from the lord chancellor; that nobleman not having hesitated, in his place as a peer, to denominate them “compositions entitled to no more credit than the Adventures of Robinson Crusoe.” On the Governor-general of Bengal, Burke poured out all the vials of his wrath; declaring that he was ready instantly to go into the proof of the numerous crimes laid to Hastings’s charge, in the *reports* presented to the house. In the name of the plundered natives of Indostan, whose grievances, he said, were intolerable, he entered his protest against Pitt’s *bill*. Against the tribunal, or court of judicature, which the minister proposed to erect for the trial of East India delinquents, he inveighed in terms of scorn and execration. Apostrophizing the common jail of London, “Oh Newgate!” he exclaimed, “forgive me if I have dishonoured your inhabitants, by comparing a highway robber with the criminals who have laid waste India, and compelled millions to feel the horrors of famine! The murderer and the

housebreaker are harmless, when opposed to those who have left whole provinces without a habitation, and have exterminated the natives throughout the fairest portions of the globe!" These accusations, which remind us of the orations pronounced by Cicero against Clodius and Verres, were repelled by Dundas, and disregarded by the house; which assembly, while it paid the tribute of just admiration to Burke's eloquence, appeared to consider him as under the delusion of party violence, deeply-rooted prejudices, and disappointed ambition. Scarcely indeed could he obtain a hearing from an audience whose patience, it must be confessed, he frequently put to severe trials. A majority of two hundred and eleven voted with the minister for going into the committee upon the new *bill*; the respective numbers being 271, and 60. So low in numerical strength had Fox fallen, and so completely had the *coalition* lost their influence over the house of commons.

*July.*—The debates that took place respecting the system of government proper to be adopted for those extensive as well as opulent provinces subjected to the East India Company, and embracing so rich a portion of Asia, brought forward to public notice various members of the house, who had hitherto remained in comparative obscurity. At their head may be placed Mr. Richard Atkinson, a man who, though now forgotten,



then occupied a conspicuous place. He was partner in a commercial firm, principally known on the Exchange of London by the names of Muir, whose connexions and transactions lay chiefly in Jamaica. Atkinson possessed a long arithmetical head, sustained by vast facility and rapidity in calculations of a pecuniary nature : qualities held in high estimation by Pitt. Under Lord North's administration, particularly towards its close, Atkinson deeply engaged in those annual loans, which, though not always negotiated, as the enemies of the minister asserted, on terms advantageous to the country, were supposed generally to produce no small emolument to the contractors. By these acquisitions he had been enabled to make considerable purchases of land in Jamaica ; and his ambition expanding with his circumstances, after first effecting his election as a director of the East India Company, he was chosen early in 1784 an alderman of the city of London. Being a determined enemy of the *coalition*, and an ardent supporter of the new ministry, he presented himself as a candidate for the honour of representing the metropolis, on the dissolution of parliament. Sawbridge, who had during so many years enjoyed great popularity east of Temple Bar, being, in consequence of his attachment to Fox, no longer equally acceptable to his fellow-citizens, incurred on this occasion the utmost risk of losing his seat as member for London. In fact, Atkin-

son ran him so hard, that Sawbridge only carried his election by *seven* votes ; the respective numbers at the close of the poll being 3823 and 3816. Nor would Sawbridge have even triumphed by this small majority, if the contest could have been continued for two hours longer ; the poll-books being scarcely shut, when three postchaises, each containing three voters, who had been brought up from distant parts of England by Atkinson, arrived at the hustings.

In consequence of this severe disappointment, he was obliged to procure for himself another seat ; and it might be esteemed singularly, or rather ridiculously unfortunate, that he should have been chosen for the borough of New Romney. Some years earlier, the commercial house of Muir and Atkinson having contracted to supply rum for the army serving in America, a great mortality had ensued among the British troops, occasioned by the quality of the article furnished, which was *new*, and therefore very pernicious in its effects on the health of the soldiery. To Atkinson's quality of a rum contractor, the "Rolliad" alludes, when, describing Pitt's powers of eloquence in debate, the author says,

"Nor *rum* contractors think his speech too long,

While words, like treacle, trickle from his tongue."

No individual was indeed marked out for more pointed attack, by the writers of that satirical composition, than Atkinson, whose name they



ingeniously contrived to connect with Jenkinson on all occasions. It is thus that they stigmatize the young first minister, as being

“Of either *Kinson*, *At*, or *Jen*, the fool.”

And again, in another part of the “*Rolliad*” they exclaim,

“All hail ! ye virtuous patriots without blot,  
The minor *Kinson*, and the major Scott !”

But, lest these lines should not be sufficiently clear in their application, the work subjoins, “The minor *Kinson*, or *Kinson* the less, is obviously Mr. Atkinson ; Mr. Jenkinson being confessedly greater than Mr. Atkinson, or any other man, except *one*, in the kingdom.”—In debate, Atkinson was able and intelligent, never speaking except upon subjects of commerce, taxation, or finance ; always with brevity, and never venturing to deviate into tracks with which he was unacquainted. Indeed, his formation of mind and education did not qualify him to call to his aid any factitious ornaments, or classic images. Towards the concluding years of his life, he became attached to a lady of beauty and of rank, Lady Anne Lindsay, then an unmarried daughter of the Earl of Balcarras, whose hand, it was supposed, he aspired to obtain. By his will he bequeathed her a considerable part of his property ; his own career being cut short in May 1785, when a feverish and consumptive complaint carried him off in the vigour of his age. If he had survived, he might not improbably have attained



to considerable distinction, and even to employments, under Pitt's administration, of which he had approved himself not only a strenuous, but a very useful adherent.

The second individual whom the discussions respecting India rendered conspicuous at this time, was Major Scott. He had been selected by Mr. Hastings, from among the military servants of the company in Bengal, and sent over to England as his avowed agent; a character which he sustained with unabated zeal, indefatigable exertion, and no contemptible talents. It was nevertheless regretted, as I know, by the governor-general's most intelligent and judicious friends, that almost from the hour of his arrival in London, Scott began to weary, and finally to disgust the public, with pamphlets that followed each other in endless succession. To this circumstance the "Rolliad" points, when *Merlin* inspecting the water-closets at the house of commons, among the inventory of furniture that he there finds and enumerates, adds,

"With reams on reams of tracts, that, without pain,  
Incessant spring from Scott's prolific brain."

The invariable object of these ephemeral productions, was to justify Hastings from the imputations thrown out against him by his enemies, to eulogize his administration, and to prepare the country for his expected return from Calcutta. Like Atkinson, Scott never brought to the agitation of subjects submitted to the house, any

foreign or irrelevant matter : but he was far more unguarded in his assertions, more frequently on his feet, and more prolix in his speeches, which he always delivered with uncommon fluency, free from any degree of embarrassment. Unfortunately for Hastings, the prudence and caution of his parliamentary representative did not equal the purity of his intentions. Relying on the meritorious public services rendered by the governor-general to his employers, and to the crown,—services meriting rather, as it might have been imagined, national approbation, and royal protection or favour, than prosecution,—Scott, imperfectly acquainted with the secret ministerial springs, reckoned too confidently on the permanent friendship of administration. While he always spoke from behind the treasury bench, and supported Pitt on almost every question, he expected reciprocal assistance from that quarter; forgetting that scarcely two years had elapsed since Dundas, in his capacity of chairman of the “secret committee,” asserted in his place, that “Mr. Hastings never visited the frontiers of Bengal without having in his contemplation the imprisonment of a prince, or the extermination of a people.”

When Fox therefore, during the debates which arose upon the new East India Bill, declaimed in animated terms against the governor-general, as a state criminal of the first magnitude; Scott, not



satisfied with denying the alleged facts, or defending them on principles of policy and necessity arising out of Hastings's position, called on Fox to bring forward, without delay, a specific charge. In like manner, only a few days later, when Burke having made a *motion* for the production of papers relative to the treatment of one of the native princes, Almas Ali Cawn, by Hastings; depicted the latter as "a scourge of God, who had reduced the beautiful provinces of Bengal to a waste and howling desert, where no human creature could exist;" Scott seconded the motion, and entreated of the house to suffer it to pass, in order that Hastings's innocence might be clearly demonstrated to the world. It is true that Pitt, by opposing some of Burke's subsequent motions respecting the governor-general's conduct towards the Princesses of Oude, which motions were thrown out without a division, seemed to extend his protection to Hastings. In effect, the minister's refusal to comply with Burke's demand of papers, not only stopped all further attempts to criminate or impeach the governor-general at that time; but produced a most intemperate and inflammatory harangue, directed by Burke against administration. Abandoning himself to the violence of his emotions, he denounced them to posterity, as "the ministers of vengeance to a guilty, a degenerate, and a thoughtless nation." He threatened them with retribution from an



offended Deity, as accomplices in the guilt of covering India with blood, while the inhabitants of that unhappy country were insulted, plundered, and oppressed. Above all, he expressed his indignation at the assertion made by Scott, that the "reports of the select committee" were partial, garbled, and libellous compositions. "I swear," exclaimed Burke, (in the classic language of the elder Brutus, which he seemed to parody,) "by those very reports here lying on your table, in the formation of which I personally bore so large a share, that the wrongs done to humanity in the Eastern world shall be avenged on those who have inflicted them! The wrath of Heaven will, sooner or later, fall upon a nation that suffers its rulers thus to oppress the innocent and the defenceless." Neither Pitt nor Dundas made any reply to these invectives. The storm which menaced Hastings was arrested and suspended, but by no means wholly averted. Under circumstances more favourable to his accusers, after his return from Bengal, they renewed the attack; and the same ministers who, in 1784, manifested a disposition to shelter him from impeachment, coinciding at a subsequent period with his enemies, sent the man who had principally saved India to take his trial at the bar of the house of peers.

Precisely at the same time when Scott appeared in the house as the advocate of Hastings, a much

more formidable, inveterate, and able adversary of the governor-general, arose among the front ranks of the opposition. I mean, Francis, whom we have since beheld invested by his majesty, on Fox's recommendation, when far advanced towards the close of life, with a red riband.

After having passed several years in Bengal, as a constituent member of the supreme council, engaged in perpetual and violent altercations with Hastings, which terminated in a duel, where Francis was wounded, he returned to England, some years before the governor-general; like the evil genius of Brutus, which met him again at Philippi. Nature had conferred on Francis talents such as are rarely dispensed to any individual,—a vast range of ideas, a retentive memory, a classic mind, considerable command of language, energy of thought and expression, matured by age, and actuated by an inextinguishable animosity to Hastings. Francis indeed uniformly disclaimed any personal enmity to the *man*, only reprobating the measures of the *ruler of India*; and perhaps he might sincerely believe his assertion. But he always appeared to me, like the son of Livia, to deposit his resentments deep in his own breast; from which he drew them forth, if not augmented by time, at least in all their original vigour and freshness. Acrimony distinguished and characterized him in everything. Even his person, tall, thin, and scantily covered with flesh; his



countenance, the lines of which were acute, intelligent, and full of meaning; the tones of his voice, sharp, yet distinct and sonorous; his very gestures, impatient and irregular,—eloquently bespoke the formation of his intellect. I believe, I never saw him smile. But, when I make this assertion, I ought in candour to add, that though I was well acquainted with Atkinson and Scott, I never had any personal knowledge of Francis, beyond acquaintance contracted in the house of commons. Nor did I ever dine in company with him except once, when we met at the Prince of Wales's table, at the Pavilion at Brighton, in the autumn of the year 1802, where Francis appeared to me to be thoroughly domesticated. Bursting with bile, which tinged and pervaded all his speeches in parliament, yet his irascibility never overcame his reason; nor compelled his friends, like those of Burke, to mingle regret with their admiration, and to condemn or to pity the individual whom they applauded as an orator. Francis, however inferior he was to Burke in all the flowers of diction, in exuberance of ideas borrowed from antiquity, and in the magic of eloquence, more than once electrified the house, by passages of pathos or of interest which arrested every hearer.

A beautiful, as well as an affecting specimen of his ability in this line, occurred during the progress of the debates on Pitt's India Bill. One of the regulations in that act abolished the trial by



jury, relative to delinquents returning from India, and instituted a new tribunal for enquiring into their misdemeanors. Against such an innovation on the British constitution Francis entered his protest, in terms of equal elegance and force. "I am not," exclaimed he, "an old man; yet I remember the time when such an attempt would have thrown the whole country into a flame. Had the experiment been made when that illustrious statesman, the late Earl of Chatham, enjoyed a seat in this assembly, he would have sprung from his bed of sickness; he would have solicited some friendly hand to lay him on the floor; and from thence, with a monarch's voice, he would have called the whole kingdom to arms, in order to oppose it. But he is dead, and has left nothing in this world that resembles him! He is dead; and the sense, the honour, the character, and the understanding of the nation, are dead with him!"

Perhaps in the whole range of Fox's, of Burke's, or of Sheridan's speeches, there does not occur a sentiment clothed in more simple yet striking language, or which knocks harder at the breast, than this short epitaph, if it may be so denominated, pronounced over the grave of the Earl of Chatham. The repetition of the words "He is dead!" were attended with the finest effect; and the reflections produced by it involuntarily attracted every eye towards the treasury bench,

where sate his son. I have rarely witnessed a moment when the passions were touched in a more masterly manner, within the walls of the house, than by Francis on the above occasion. The impression made by it on Pitt is asserted to have been of the deepest kind.

While I am engaged on the subject of Sir Philip Francis, I feel myself impelled to resume a question which I have already agitated elsewhere at considerable length;—I mean, Who was the author of the Letters of *Junius*? At the time when I attempted to discuss that mysterious and interesting enquiry, my opinion, after examining the various pretensions set up, inclined to Wm. Gerard Hamilton. But, in leaning towards that supposition, as being then apparently sustained on the best authority, I expressly added, that “it by no means amounted to demonstration, or approached to certainty.” And I further stated my reasons for thinking that *Junius* might be still alive, though of course very far advanced in his career. Since the year 1815, several new publications have appeared, throwing light upon the topic; in particular, two which merit attention, both of them recently given to the world. One, written by Mr. George Chalmers, who has long held an efficient employment under government, entitled “The Author of *Junius* ascertained,” attributes those letters to Hugh Macaulay Boyd; a name which was long ago mentioned



among the candidates. The other publication, of an anonymous description, and denominated, "The Identity of *Junius* with a distinguished living Character, established," confers it on Sir Philip Francis. These two productions are now lying before me. The first is dictatorial and dogmatical, rather demanding submission to the opinions laid down, than calmly enforcing conviction by arguments and facts. Nor does Mr. Chalmers seem to be exempt from the oblivious inadvertence of old age, in some parts of the discussion, as must be too apparent to every attentive reader. That Boyd was a man of very considerable talents, subsisting by their exertion during many years, composing with elegance and facility, alike able and disposed to imitate the style of Junius, whose fame he emulated; these facts are incontestable. But all the proofs of his having actually written the celebrated letters issued under that signature, seem to repose on no solid foundation. With the true spirit of a placeman, Chalmers considers Junius as a seditious writer, deserving universal reprobation. He even carries his prejudices, or rather, his enmities, so far as to depreciate those inimitable compositions, which he describes as deficient in grammatical accuracy, full of false English; finally, the productions of an inexperienced youth.

Junius will not, however, be considered by posterity as an advocate of rebellion, or even of



sedition. True, he is not a courtier; but there is neither democracy nor jacobinism in his writings. Far from inculcating such principles, he is, on the contrary, loyal; not, indeed, to the mere office of a king, however abused, or ill advised, or despotic; but to the constitutional office of a British prince, the sovereign of a free people. And *when* did he write? Let us be just to Junius, as well as to George the Third. Time will equalize them in a certain degree, and pass sentence on both, though not perhaps before the twentieth century. We stand at present too much under the shadow of the house of Brunswick to allow our reason, or our pens, fair play. Junius wrote principally between 1769 and 1772, during the administrations of the Duke of Grafton and of Lord North. Will any man dispute or deny that, as a nation, we were then comparatively fallen in the eyes of Europe? Will any man contend that the government was vigorously, or ably, or successfully administered, during that period of his majesty's reign? Did we resemble the country that, under the first Mr. Pitt, ten years earlier, between 1759 and 1762, humbled both the branches of the house of Bourbon? No. We were sunk in the estimation of the Continental powers, and involved at home in domestic feuds; while the king, long before Junius attacked him, had lost all his transitory popularity. Nay more, notwithstanding the acknowledged

rectitude of his intentions, he had then forfeited much of the veneration of his subjects. He subsequently recovered it, after the peace of 1783, and the appearance of the Prince of Wales. "Junius's Letters" contain a true but a highly-coloured picture of the time in which they were written, exaggerated upon certain points or facts. That inaccuracies of composition, and even errors of concord or of grammar, are to be found in those letters, will be admitted; but, to defend them as the productions of a superior and a masterly pen, to defend them from the attacks of Chalmers, would be like rescuing Pope from the criticisms of Lintot and of Curl.

After endeavouring to prove his assertion relative to Boyd, by stating as evidence the belief or the suspicions of several persons who were impressed with the same sentiment as himself; Chalmers triumphantly concludes by adducing "the confession of the culprit" to Monsieur Bonnacarrere, —a confession made by Boyd while at Calcutta, in the year 1785, under Sir John Macpherson's roof, who was then governor-general of Bengal. I well knew the individual here mentioned, Bonnacarrere, in London and at Paris, previous as well as subsequent to the French revolution. He was a man of ingratiating manners, whose imposing figure, animated conversation, and personal accomplishments secured him a favourable reception in society. The Viscount de Souillac, governor of the



island of Mauritius, sent him in 1785 to Calcutta, as a spy ; an office for which Bonaparte again selected him in 1802, when he was dispatched to England, and remained during a few weeks in Leicester-square ; where, in company with Sir John Macpherson, I visited him. His qualities always appeared to me more adapted to secret political intrigue than to open, honourable negotiation. Under the old administration of France he had vainly attempted, after his return from India, to obtain employment. Sir John Macpherson, conversing at Lausanne, in the year 1791, with the Maréchal de Castries, who had occupied a high place in the councils of Louis the Sixteenth, expressed to the marshal his surprize at finding that the French government had not availed themselves of the talents and information of Bonnacarrere. “ C’est que nous l’avons pris pour un *claque*dent,” answered Castries. I believe that term, if translated into English, is nearly synonymous with our *chatterbox*. I do not, however, mean to imply the slightest doubt of Boyd’s having asserted to Bonnacarrere that he wrote the letters of Junius. Indeed, it appears from Chalmers’s publication, that Boyd laboured so much under the weight and magnitude of his own pretended secret, or was so anxious to enjoy the fame attendant on its disclosure, as to *insinuate* to English gentlemen at Madras, though he never *asserted* to them in



express terms, the fact of his having been the author of the letters in question. But the mere assertion of any man, that he composed them, can carry no conviction, unless sustained by authentic documents, or at least, by internal moral proofs, drawn from a life of unquestionable rectitude, and a character for strict veracity. Chalmers himself depicts Boyd as a venal writer, lending his pen to maintain almost any cause for which he was remunerated; idle and dissipated, though labouring under continual pecuniary embarrassments, which accompanied him to the close of life; and deficient in high moral principle.

Are we then to regard his assertion, made to a foreigner and a spy, under injunctions of secrecy, as furnishing any proof of the fact? And can we suppose that a man so anxious to attain the fame of being Junius, as to hazard divulging the secret during his life, would not, if he had written those letters, have taken measures at least to secure to himself the reputation annexed to them, after his decease? Yet, though he survived nearly nine years his communication made to Bonnacarrere, no posthumous document whatever has appeared in support of his claim, down to the present day. But, as far as the conviction of contemporaries on the point can weigh in deciding our opinion, Chalmers himself has furnished us two, both which militate completely against Boyd. The first is, "a very eminent member of the Irish

bar, Sir William Duncan," who, in a letter, of which Chalmers gives an extract, while he does justice to Boyd's various talents, whom he personally knew from early life, yet expresses his disbelief of Boyd's having possessed "the knowledge of the political drama, and of the *dramatis personæ*, there exhibited;" namely, in "Junius's Letters." We have, however, much higher and more unimpeachable authority, Lord Macartney; under whose protection, and in whose immediate service, Boyd, in 1781, went out to Madras.

That nobleman, though of a harsh, severe, and unaccommodating temper, possessed an enlarged understanding, great knowledge of men, and a very sound judgment. "Having been shut up," says he, "in a small packet with Mr. Boyd during a four months' passage to India, without once letting go an anchor, I had frequent opportunities of sounding his depth, and of studying, and knowing him well, though I was not before personally acquainted with him. I do not say that he was incapable of writing to the full as well as Junius; but I say, I do not by any means believe that he was the author of 'Junius.' Mr. Boyd had many splendid passages of 'Junius' by heart, as also of Mr. Burke's parliamentary speeches; and was also a great admirer of Sterne, whose manner he affected in his private letters. Mr. Chalmers's argument would be stronger, if any performance of Mr. Boyd, previous to the appear-

ance of 'Junius,' could be found, which indicated that 'Junius' might be expected from such a writer." After so weighty a refutation of Chalmers's hypothesis as is contained in the short criticism above cited, (which Lord Macartney wrote on a spare leaf of Chalmers's first work, where he had attempted to prove Boyd the author of "Junius,") we are only astonished at its being reiterated by the same person. Instead, however, of yielding to Lord Macartney's reasons, Chalmers endeavours to prove that his lordship and all mankind have been totally mistaken, in imagining the letters of Junius to be classic productions, or fine compositions. Relative to the memorable "Letter to the King, of the 19th December 1769," he denominates it "balderdash;" concluding with a compliment to George the Third, at Junius's expence, for presuming to write such trash to "a personage who perfectly knew the proprieties of his native tongue."

Widely different is the impression made on my mind by the other publication, identifying *Junius* with Sir Philip Francis. Here, every page combining to a common point, ultimately forces conviction. Chalmers, reasoning on peculiarities of idiom or of expression found in "Junius's Letters," infers, probably with reason, that the author was a native of Ireland. But Boyd's pretensions gain nothing by this admission, Francis and he having equally been born at Dublin. If,



however, Boyd was *Junius*, he must have composed his first letter, dated "21st January 1769," before he had attained his twenty-third year; having come into the world on the "16th of April 1746." And he must have finished the whole series before he attained to twenty-six. Such powers of mind, independent of the information necessary for the work, would approach to a prodigy. On the other hand, if we assume the letters in question to have been the work of Sir Philip Francis, our admiration is qualified by knowing that he had passed his twenty-eighth year when the first letter in the series was published; and had more than accomplished his thirty-first at their conclusion. But a difficulty, if possible still more insurmountable, on the supposition that Boyd was *Junius*, is to discover by what means he could have attained the variety of official, military, legal, and other knowledge, displayed throughout those letters. Whoever will peruse them with that object in his contemplation, must necessarily perceive that only a person instructed in such details, and accurately informed upon them, could have put the questions to Sir Wm. Draper, which *Junius* asks, relative to the sale of his regiment, his half-pay, and his pension. Still less could he have written the letter of the "17th October 1769," enumerating the circumstances of General Gansel's rescue. Boyd possessed no obvious facilities of obtaining such in-

formation; while Francis, who occupied a considerable post in the War Office, during the whole period between 1769 and 1772, had access to every kind of official knowledge. He was, indeed, compelled to resign his situation, early in the last of those two years, precisely at the very point of time when Junius ceased to write. Yet these circumstances, strong as they must be esteemed, form only the foundation on which rests the supposition. The superstructure is found in the unvaried and striking coincidence, not only of general sentiment, but of language and expression, between the letters of Junius, and the speeches of Francis, during more than twenty years that he sate in the house of commons. It appears impossible that such a perfect similitude could exist without identity. If, however, any further proof were wanting, it seems to be furnished by the written answer which Sir Philip Francis made to the enquiry, whether he was *Junius*? an answer given in the publication to which I allude. It is precisely the reply which a man would make, who, approaching the end of life, wished to anticipate the fame of Junius, and to reclaim it indirectly for himself, without at the same time incurring either the obloquy, or the danger, annexed to such an admission. I consider it as conclusive, because Sir Philip Francis would, I conceive, never have allowed a doubt to exist of his being the author of "*Junius's Letters*," while

he was conscious of never having written them. Boyd, on the contrary, it is evident, wished to be *thought* Junius, though he never ventured to *assert* it to any of his own countrymen. Lastly, if we once ascertain that Junius is still alive, the solution of that mystery, which during near half a century has overhung the writer of those celebrated letters, seems to be developed. Under this impression, I cannot help inferring, that whenever Francis is withdrawn from among us, we shall probably arrive at the certainty of his having been Junius.\*

The financial and legislative discussions which arose in the house of commons, upon the measures proposed by the first minister, during the month of July, though not of the magnitude or importance of "the East India Bill," yet offered matter of interesting attention. Among the abuses that then loudly demanded correction, was the privilege of franking letters; and Pitt judiciously selected it for an object of taxation. As neither the *date* of the letter, nor the *place* from which it was sent, was then necessary to be inserted, in order to render it free of postage, when

\* Sir Philip has been called away by death since the foregoing paragraph was written, and yet hitherto no positive information has been communicated to the world respecting the point under discussion. I do not, however, on that account retract any opinion that I have hazarded on the subject.—  
22nd June 1820.



directed by a member of either house of parliament; the number of franks exacted, and the improper use made of those vehicles of intelligence or correspondence, required ministerial interposition. Not only were covers transmitted by hundreds, packed in boxes, from one part of the kingdom to another, and laid up as a magazine for future expenditure; far greater perversions of the original principle, for purposes very injurious to the revenue, took place. I was acquainted with a member of the house of commons, a native of Scotland, decorated with the order of the Bath, who sent up to London from Edinburgh, by one post, thirty-three covers, addressed to an eminent banking-house in the Strand; many or most of which contained, not letters, but garden-seeds. So scandalous a violation of the right claimed and exercised under the privilege of parliament, induced the postmasters-general of that time to order the covers, instead of being delivered according to the address, to be instantly carried up to the speaker's chair, as a fit subject for public notice and animadversion. Timely application having, however, been made to Lord North, then first minister, by the friends of the gentleman who had so acted, and who was a steady supporter of government; the business never came before the house, or acquired publicity. In 1784 it was thought sufficient to enact that the *place, day, month, and year*, where and when the

frank was dated, should be henceforward written on the cover: but subsequent regulations have still further reduced the privilege, by diminishing to one half the *weight* antecedently allowed; namely, to one ounce, instead of two; and by restricting the *number* which can be issued, or received free of postage, on the same day: thus very properly contracting to narrow limits the facility of sending letters many hundred miles, without paying for their transport, in this commercial and corresponding country. It still constitutes, nevertheless, a distinction to the members of the legislature, though now diminished to the shadow of its pristine usage; for I am old enough to remember the time when only the *name* of the member, with the word *free*, written on the outside of a letter, constituted a frank. I have indeed heard that they were then sold by the waiters of coffee-houses, and exposed for sale in the windows. Such abuses, which were dishonouring to the two legislative assemblies, have happily produced, though slowly, their own remedy.

Wit always mingled in every debate or discussion where Sheridan took part; even on topics not commonly susceptible of being made the vehicle of ridicule and amusement. Pitt, among the minor objects which he selected for taxation, having proposed that one guinea should be paid for every horse entered to start for any match;



Lord Surrey, who possessed much racing knowledge, advised him to alter his tax, and to substitute in its place five pounds on the winning horse of any plate of fifty pounds' value. The minister, without abandoning his original proposition, instantly adopted, with many acknowledgments, the earl's suggestion; and having amended his first motion, annexed to it the other, which, of course, met with no resistance. He did not omit at the same time to confess his own ignorance on subjects connected with the *turf*, and his obligation to the noble person who had so kindly, as well as ably, assisted him. Sheridan, who sate close by Lord Surrey, then rising, after having paid some compliments to the chancellor of the exchequer on his dexterity and *jockeyship*, in thus leaving his noble friend behind him, observed, that whenever Lord Surrey should next visit Newmarket, or Ascot Heath, his sporting companions, who would be *sweated* by this new tax of his fabrication, instead of commending his ingenuity, would probably exclaim,

“Jockey of Norfolk, be not so bold!”

A more felicitous application of the words supposed to have been affixed over the tent of the first Duke of Norfolk, on the night preceding the battle of Bosworth, could not have been imagined. It convulsed the house; and even Pitt, whose features did not always relax on hearing Sheridan's jests, however brilliant or apposite they



might be, joined in the laugh excited at Lord Surrey's expence; observing at the same time, that "he believed it was the first instance of a committee of ways and means, occupied in the painful duty of proposing taxes, having been terminated in so lively a manner."

Not that Sheridan by any means exclusively monopolized the wit on the opposition benches. Besides Lord North, whose name can never be mentioned without recollecting the sallies of genuine humour with which he always illuminated, and often enlightened, subjects of parliamentary discussion; there were other individuals to be found in that part of the house, who contributed their share. Among them I must not omit Courtenay. He was nobly allied on his mother's side, Lady Jane Stuart; she being a sister of John, Earl of Bute, who acted so conspicuous, though not (as far as his *ministerial* fame is concerned) enviable or glorious a part in the councils of the crown, at an early period of the present reign. I know not whether Courtenay, who was by birth an Irishman, actually descended in the paternal line from the Latin Emperors of Constantinople of that name: but no man seemed to me more likely than himself to say, with the satirist of Domitian's reign, in his contempt of ancestry,

"Stemmata quid faciunt? Quid prodest, Pontice, longo  
Sanguine censeri?"——

He was, in truth, of the school of Diogenes, though at an early period of his life he had served, during a considerable time, in the army. I never remember a more complete cynic in his dress, manners, and general deportment; all which bespoke that inattention to external appearances or forms, characteristic of the philosopher of Sinopé. But under this neglected exterior lay concealed a classic mind, an understanding highly cultivated, a vast variety of information, and a vigorous intellect. His wit, though commonly derived from Roman or Athenian sources, savoured more of Aristophanes than of Menander; of Petronius Arbiter, or of Juvenal, than of Horace. It was always coarse; generally, caustic and satirical; not unfrequently indecorous or offensive to a great degree. He possessed considerable powers of oratory, unrepressed by timidity, and borrowing assistance from irony on every subject, even the most serious. Lord Townsend, to whom he was strongly attached, brought him into parliament for Tamworth. When that nobleman held the post of master-general of the ordnance, under Lord North's administration, and afterwards under the *coalition* ministry, Courtenay occupied the employment at first of secretary, and lastly of surveyor, of the ordnance. Like Diogenes, he was poor; but of a high and independent character, that seemed to despise wealth. Rose, one of the two secretaries of the



treasury, who generally took an active part on all revenue questions, or financial subjects, as it was natural that he should do, not coming forward immediately to Pitt's aid, one evening when the house was engaged relative to the interest allowed by government on navy bills; Courtenay apostrophized him under the flower that bears his name; asking him,

“ Quid lates dudum, *Rosa* ?

Delicatura effer e terris caput,

O tepentis filia cœli !”

Rose, who was little versed in the lore of antiquity, made no reply to this invocation, which he probably did not thoroughly understand; but Courtenay did not always deal his sarcasms round him with equal success or impunity.

I remember, not many days after the circumstance which I have just related, during a debate that took place upon commuting the duties on tea, and setting limits to smuggling, Brook Watson expressed himself strongly in favour of the measure proposed by administration. He was a man of quaint, formal manners, but of an acute understanding and of recognized probity. After acting as commissary to the British forces in America, on his return to this country, at the termination of the war, he had been chosen an alderman of London, and afterwards one of the representatives for the capital; coming in by a great majority, at the head of the four candidates,



on the recent election. Watson having asserted in the course of his speech, that "his constituents highly approved of the *bill*, as they were professed enemies to contraband practices, and to smuggling;" Courtenay observed in answer, that "he was happy to know, from such high authority, the change which had taken place among the citizens of London, on so important a point. For," added he, "they lay under very invidious imputations; scarcely a century having elapsed, since a comic writer," (I believe, Vanbrugh,) "who, in one of his dramatic pieces, has introduced on the stage a city alderman, thought proper to call him by a name characteristic of his profession, namely, *Alderman Smuggler*. I therefore congratulate the worthy magistrate on the conversion operated among his constituents." Courtenay continuing to speak for a considerable time, Watson had leisure to recover from the first shock of this sarcasm; and when the former had finished, the alderman starting up, entreated the patience of the house for a single moment. "The honourable gentleman," observed he, "has been severe upon me, and has alluded to a character introduced upon the theatre under the name of *Alderman Smuggler*: but I hope he will be pleased to remember that another of our dramatic writers," (Beaumont and Fletcher,) "has exhibited on the stage, a *Copper Captain*." So appropriate a repartee coming by retort, from a quarter where the house did not look for wit,

produced a proportionate effect, and turned the laugh against Courtenay.

Having mentioned incidentally Mr. Rose, I shall say a few words relative to him, and to his colleague Mr. Steele, who were joint secretaries of the treasury during so long a series of years, under Pitt's administration. Both are still living at this time, in March 1817. Both are privy councillors. Yet hardly do Hogarth's "good and bad apprentice" present a stronger contrast, towards the evening of their lives, than is now offered by Rose and Steele. The first not only continues to be still a member of the house of commons, holding a great as well as a lucrative employment, treasurer of the navy, and extending the same support at present to Lord Liverpool which, more than thirty years ago, he gave to Pitt: Rose has likewise accumulated, in his own person, some of the most beneficial offices in the gift of parliament, or belonging to the exchequer. He has besides got complete possession of a Hampshire borough; during the accomplishment of which solid object of ambition, he contrived to make both knights and baronets: such was his commanding interest with Pitt. After procuring for his eldest son the hand of an heiress, young, as well as agreeable in her person; Rose has placed him among the foreign ministers, at one of the most important courts of Germany. Nor has he forgotten to place his second son,

advantageously, here at home, among the officers of the house of peers. On the New Forest, of which tract he is himself a verdurer, Rose has acquired a very enviable and extensive landed property : thus realizing almost every component part of a high and permanent fortune, except one ; I mean, the British peerage. Not that he was oblivious of that distinction, which would have set the seal to all his former acquisitions. On the contrary, his son having married, in the year 1796, a lady (Miss Duncomb) in whose family there had once been an earldom (Feversham) ; common fame asserted that he aspired to elevate his grandsons, if not his son, to a seat in the house of lords, by procuring for his daughter-in-law, or reviving in her person, the title of Baroness Feversham. We cannot indeed feel any surprize at such an expectation or attempt on his part, when we reflect that in the same year 1796 the earldom of Liverpool was created, and in the following year originated the British peerage of Carrington. Down to the present time, however, Rose and his descendants still remain commoners ; though almost oppressed under the load of offices, reversions, and places, which, in the course of a long, laborious, and meritorious public life, he has acquired for himself, or for his family.

Rose was understood to be a natural son of the late Earl of Marchmont, celebrated by Pope, as Lord Polwarth ; and who, like Lord Mansfield,



survived the principal men of genius that shed a lustre over the two dull reigns of George the First and Second. Lord Marchmont, by his will, bequeathed to Rose his superb library. Lord Thurlow, I believe, originally recommended him to Pitt. He continued unalterably attached to that minister, and he possessed many qualities highly deserving of Pitt's confidence. Indefatigable, methodical, and yet rapid; equal to, but not above the business of the treasury; he earned his reward by long and severe exertion. The opposition reproached him with duplicity; and the "Probationary Odes," parodying the favourite air of "The Rose," assert that

"No rogue that goes,  
Is like that *Rose*,  
Or scatters such deceit!"

But, I knew him well in his official capacity, during at least twelve years, and I never found him deficient in honour or sincerity. I owe him this justice. It must likewise be recollected how difficult a task he had to perform, in keeping at bay, yet not irritating or alienating, the crowd of ministerial claimants in both houses of parliament. During more than fifteen years, he formed the mound on which those waves principally broke, and spent their force. Nor did he possess the ample means of appeasing or conciliating suitors, which Robinson enjoyed under Lord North's administration: Burke's *bill* had greatly contracted

the patronage of government; and though, during the course of Pitt's administration, between 1784 and 1801, the power of the crown augmented, not only in the army and navy, but throughout India, as a natural consequence of our new territorial conquests or acquisitions; yet, the number of places in the disposal of the treasury here at home, almost annually diminished by suppressions. Rose's countenance bore the deep impression of care diffused over every feature. All the labours and conflicts of his office might be traced in its lineaments. Not so Steele. His face, which was cast in another mould, rather reminded of a Bacchus or a Silenus, from its jollity, rotundity, and good humour, than it impressed with ideas of ability or forethought. He was placed about Pitt by the powerful interest of the Duke of Richmond; his father being recorder of Chichester, which city Steele represented in several successive parliaments. His faculties, though good, were moderate, and would never of themselves have conducted him to any eminence in public life; but he rose through the gradations of office, in a series of years, till he became one of the joint paymasters of the forces. On Pitt's resignation in 1801, I believe he continued in place under Addington: but, not having satisfactorily accounted for about nineteen thousand pounds of public money, he was called on to explain the deficiency, as Lord Holland had formerly been,



to a much larger amount, while holding the same employment. The sum, however, being replaced, Steele, whose social temper and qualities had procured him many friends, remained on the list of privy councillors: but he has retired into the political shade, and no more stands prominent on the canvas, like his antient colleague, Rose; who, at seventy, erect in mind and in body, possessing all his intellect, active, as well as able, still takes his seat on the treasury bench; and may possibly close his laborious career by attaining to higher honours or dignities than he has yet acquired.

*August.*—One of the most enlarged and liberal, as well as wise and conciliating measures, adopted by the legislature during the course of the present reign, originated in the house of commons at this time: but, Dundas, not Pitt, constituted the channel through which it ostensibly proceeded. I mean, the restitution of the estates in Scotland, forfeited to the crown in the rebellion of the year 1745. With great dexterity, the treasurer of the navy, while he depicted the beneficial consequences to the state that must result from adopting a line of policy so magnanimous in itself, took care to ascribe its original spirit and conception to the father of his friend, the young minister who sat near him. That illustrious statesman, said Dundas, whose mind was elevated above all local prejudices, boasted with reason that he sought for merit wherever he could dis-



cover it ; disdaining to enquire whether a man had been rocked in a cradle to the north, or to the south, of the Tweed. “ I found the qualities that I wanted,” observed he, “ in the mountains of the North, among a hardy race of men, labouring under national proscription. I called them forth to fight our battles, and I have experienced that their loyalty and fidelity can only be equalled by their valour.” This testimony, so just, and yet so honourable to the natives of the Highlands, prepared the audience that he addressed, for granting the boon. Indeed, I never remember to have seen the house more unanimous on any point. Fox even surpassed Pitt, in the demonstration of his readiness to restore the forfeited lands. He declared that the measure ought not to stop at the limits prescribed to it ; but, in justice, as well as in sound policy, should extend to all English forfeitures incurred by the last rebellion. The only contest between them seeming to be how to render it sufficiently comprehensive in its operation, the *bill* passed the lower house without a dissentient voice.

So much the greater astonishment was excited, when, on its arrival in the house of peers, the lord chancellor, from whom it was natural to expect that such a *bill* would have received support, drew out against it his powerful weapons of debate. Not however, it must be owned, so much against the act of restitution itself, abstractedly

considered, as in opposition to the time, the mode, and the channel through which it flowed. After lamenting that a proposition of such serious import and magnitude should be introduced at a moment when parliament might be almost daily expected to rise; he protested that its nature and purport had never been communicated to *him* before it arrived at their lordships' bar. But, he said that he had other and more weighty arguments to urge in his official capacity. "Acts of grace and pardon, my lords," observed he, "should regularly originate within these walls; or rather, with the sovereign himself, the constitutional fountain of mercy. Had it arisen there, I must probably have been informed of it; and at the same time I should have known the grounds upon which his majesty is willing to relax the severity of the existing laws, in the present instance. The form of proceeding would then have been by a message from the crown to this house; not on the motion of an individual member, made in another assembly." Having subsequently pointed out many incongruities, unproved assertions, and objections to the *bill* as it stood; he finished by declaring, that if a resolution was taken, at all events to force the measure forward, and to pass it, he would absent himself from any further discussions on the subject. These arguments, which unquestionably were solid, no less than constitutional; and, as coming from so high



a quarter, were supposed to have had the king's secret sanction or approbation; did not, however, prevent the rapid passage of the *bill* through the upper house, or impede its receiving the royal assent. Even those persons who most approved and admired its principle, yet agreed in sentiment with Lord Thurlow. Nor was it possible to avoid perceiving that Dundas had been allowed by Pitt, in some measure to assume the royal functions and attributes, while he was thus made the parliamentary medium of conferring an act of grace on his proscribed countrymen. It forcibly demonstrated Dundas's ascendant over the minister, and contributed essentially to lay the foundations of that prodigious influence, which he gradually established and exercised throughout every part of Scotland, during Pitt's whole administration.

*2nd—9th August.*—The new "East India Bill," after having passed the commons, was sent up nearly at the same time to the house of peers. This code of law, which legislated for British Asia, and which, in the ambitious, no less than imprudent hands of Fox, had convulsed the kingdom, shaken the throne, and overturned the administration; now scarcely attracted attention in that assembly, where, eight months earlier, the British constitution had asserted all its energies, in order to rescue and protect the sovereign. During the absence of Lord Loughborough, who was en-



gaged on the circuit, in the discharge of his judicial functions, and on whose abilities the systematic opposition to government principally reposed; that task devolved on Lord Stormont and the Earl of Carlisle. If the opposition peers, when deprived of Lord Loughborough's assistance, might be considered as wanting their best support; on the other hand, the ministerial ability in the upper house was almost exclusively confined to the person of the chancellor. Never perhaps, at any period of the present reign, could administration boast of less eloquence or talents within those walls, than during the first years after Pitt took upon himself the reins of government! The president of the council, Earl Gower, rarely or never mixed in debate: while Lord Howe, who, when a member of the house of commons, found himself unable to express his ideas in perspicuous language, even on subjects with which he must have been professionally acquainted, could not be expected to elucidate, or to defend, a measure of deep and complicated policy, intended for the government of India. The Duke of Richmond, even had he possessed the ability, stood so deeply committed upon various points essential to the *bill*, against which, while engaged in opposing Lord North, he had spoken, voted, or protested, that he could not, without a degree of unbecoming inconsistency, give it any strong support. Of the two secre-

taries of state, the Marquis of Carmarthen, who conducted the foreign department, though a nobleman of information, spirit, and considerable attainments of mind, yet wanted those parliamentary powers, as well as the local knowledge of India, requisite for extending efficient aid. He was, in fact, rather an elegant and accomplished individual, than an able minister. From his colleague, Lord Sydney, better exertions were expected; but the reputation that he had acquired while seated on the opposition bench, as a member of the minority in the lower house, during Lord North's administration, he did not preserve or sustain after his elevation to the peerage. Down to the last evening that he remained on the treasury bench, as secretary of state, under Lord Shelburne's government, *Tommy Townsend* displayed very considerable talents. *Lord Sydney*, when removed to the upper house of parliament, seemed to have sunk into an ordinary man. His best security for a continuance in office was the alliance that he had formed with the young first minister, whose brother, the Earl of Chatham, had married, during the preceding year, one of Lord Sydney's daughters. Under such unfavourable circumstances, Lord Thurlow nevertheless undertook to defend the new East India Bill; to repel the animated attacks of Lord Stormont, and to answer the objections of the Earl of Carlisle. He was not a little aided by the advanced season



of the year. So thin an attendance of peers, upon so important a subject, probably it would not be easy to parallel on the journals of the house. Only one division occurred during its discussion, when the *contents* amounted to eleven; the *non-contents* being four. Lord Shelburne took no part in the debates, and, I believe, never once attended in his place. The privy seal, which had been put into commission, was not yet conferred on Lord Camden; who therefore, not being a member of the cabinet, however attached he might personally be to Pitt, extended little or no assistance to the measure. Intractable or sullen as the chancellor proved on many occasions, and justly as he was reproached by his ministerial colleagues for these defects of character; it would be unjust to deny the important service that he rendered to administration, during the passage of the "East India Bill" through the upper house of parliament.

Among the subjects of accusation against the first lord of the treasury to which the opposition had recourse, and which they endeavoured to impress by every means upon the public mind at this time, was the charge of his subserviency to the East India interest. They depicted him as a mere puppet in the hands of the *Bengal squad*; precisely as they had held up Lord North, during many years, to national contempt or detestation, for his pretended subjection to secret influence in



the person of Jenkinson. No imputation could be more calculated to undermine that high and elevated character which Pitt had hitherto sustained; on which foundation rested principally his power;—an edifice reposing on public opinion and admiration, far more even than on royal favour. Satire and poetry envenomed, while they sharpened, these weapons. “From the treasury bench,” says the “*Rolliad*,” describing the local interior of the house of commons, “we ascend one step to the India bench,” where

“Exalted sit

The Pillars of Prerogative and *Pitt*;

Delights of Asia, ornaments of man,

Thy sovereign’s sovereigns, happy Hindostan!”

On an impartial examination of the charge, it seems, however, to be repelled by irresistible facts. That the East India proprietors and directors, when menaced with extinction and confiscation of their property by Fox’s *bill*, crept under Pitt’s gaberdine, in order to avoid the fury of the storm, (as *Trinculo* does under that of *Caliban*,) is indeed true. Like *Trinculo* too, when the violence of the storm was over, they ventured to peep out, to look about them, and to protect their own interests. But, how little subjection the minister exhibited to the “Bengal squad,” was fully displayed by his abandoning Hastings when impeached, and even joining with his prosecutors, a few years after his own accession to

power. Neither did the creation of a tribunal, exclusively named for the trial of persons accused of misconduct in India,—a tribunal previously unknown to the British constitution, and erected by the new “East India Bill,”—appear to hold out either protection or impunity to delinquents returning from Asia. Fox, nevertheless, did not hesitate to avail himself of this accusation, which he brought forward in debate, and attempted to fix on his successful antagonist.

*4th August.*—During the last days of the session, Pitt having introduced a *bill* for enabling the East India Company to make a dividend of eight per cent., and at the same time for remitting the sum of one hundred thousand pounds due by the company to the public; Fox arraigned the measure, as calculated for insidious, dark, and reprehensible purposes. In language of great severity, he demanded if administration ought to be permitted, after imposing on the British people taxes of the most onerous description, to keep so large a sum out of the public coffers, in order to put it into the pockets of the East India Company? “When,” exclaimed he, “we connect the present act with the *bill* now pending in the upper house for the regulation of that company; may we not justly assert, that instead of establishing an *English* government over *India*, as the bill which *I* presented in the late parliament professed and attempted to do, the inevitable

tendency of the measures now in agitation is the establishment of an *Indian* government in *England*?"

Sensible how deep and how wide must be the operation of such a charge, when circulated throughout the kingdom, from the head of the opposition, the first minister instantly rose to repel the insinuation. Having stigmatized the speech just pronounced, as equally malevolent and inflammatory, he asked how the assumptions that it contained were warranted? "Where," enquired he, "are the means of establishing an Indian government in England, to be found in the present bill? Has the actual administration attempted to invade the property of the East India Company, to assume its patronage, to appropriate to themselves its revenues, and to render it the engine of permanent political power? Have *I* endeavoured to place myself in an unconstitutional situation, by erecting a fourth branch of the legislature, and seizing upon the supreme authority of the state? Or, if such intentions are anywhere to be found, must they not be sought in the clauses of the late East India Bill?" Personal as these recriminations were, others followed, if possible, still more severe. Pitt, irritated at the imputation of having culpably remitted the debt due by the company to the public, commented on the conduct of Fox's father, Lord Holland; whom he accused, though without expressly naming him,



of paying neither principal nor interest of the sums long since due to the country ;—a debt which, he added, ought to be exacted, not remitted. In vain did Fox complain of the illiberality of such allusions, as unbecoming and disorderly. Dundas, justifying the first lord of the treasury, reminded his adversary, that whatever invidious observations had fallen from the minister's lips, he had himself provoked, and must therefore bear. The house remained during the whole time silent and passive witnesses of the altercation. No further attempt was made from any quarter to prolong the debate; and Fox, conscious of the paucity of his numbers, did not even venture on a division. This scene, where the two leaders came forward before their respective forces, as if to break a hostile lance against each other, terminated triumphantly for the head of the administration.

*20th August.*—The session, prolonged to a period of the year which is without any precedent in our modern parliamentary annals, at length closed; and Pitt, after making such successful exertions for the attainment of office, had leisure calmly to contemplate his own elevation. Extraordinary and rapid as it had been, that of Dundas might justly excite equal admiration. Only nine months earlier, he presented the melancholy spectacle of a Scotch advocate proscribed by the *coalition*, without apparent chance of public employ-

ment, nearly destitute of fortune, and unprovided with official means of subsistence. Fox, if he had used his newly-acquired ministerial power with moderation, instead of endeavouring to construct it on ambitious and unconstitutional foundations,—if he had patiently awaited the effect of time, aided by his own exertions, for surmounting the royal prejudices and antipathies entertained against him, instead of using the two houses of parliament as his instruments to fetter and disarm the sovereign,—must have held firm possession of office. In such a case, Dundas, notwithstanding his great acknowledged talents, might have remained during as many years on the opposition bench, as we have beheld Sheridan stationary there, in our time. But, Fox's imprudence, propelled by his resentment at the king's fixed alienation, and urged on by Burke's impatient ardour, did not allow him to perceive, that while he meditated the establishment of his own greatness, he was only labouring for his political rival. If Pitt attained the first place in the state, Dundas may with truth be said to have gained the second: for, though he was not a cabinet minister, yet, in the essential functions of official authority and influence, he far outweighed either of the secretaries of state, or even the chancellor. They, as well as the first lord of the admiralty, the master-general of the ordnance, and the president of the council, were all members of the

upper house. Dundas, by his presence on the treasury bench, came into daily contact with Pitt during many months of the year, when parliament was assembled ; rose to defend him when personally attacked, and after long debates, commonly accompanied the chancellor of the exchequer to Downing-street ; as, some sessions earlier, he had been accustomed to repair to the Pay Office, when Rigby presided over that department, under Lord North's administration.

In the autumn of 1784, Dundas united in his own person some of the most solid, and, at the same time, brilliant public employments. As treasurer of the navy, he enjoyed a very lucrative place, to which were subsequently attached apartments in Somerset House. But, like Pitt, he never practised economy ; and though a man of business, yet pleasure in every shape presented to him irresistible allurements. The creation of an East India Board of Control, for the management of our political affairs in that quarter of the globe, which formed an important feature of Pitt's *bill*, followed immediately the prorogation of parliament. At its head Lord Sydney was nominally placed as president. The chancellor of the exchequer occupied likewise a seat at it ; as did the two joint paymasters of the forces, Lord Mulgrave and Mr. William Grenville. To these members was added Lord Walsingham : but, the whole power resided with Dundas, who, having



secretly concerted his measures with Pitt, dictated his pleasure to the others on every point. Within two years afterwards, when Lord Walsingham expressed his reluctance to sign a dispatch tendered for his immediate approbation, he was dismissed ; and Lord Frederic Campbell, a countryman of Dundas, more accommodating in his disposition, replaced the vacancy occasioned at the board. Economy forming ostensibly a prominent part of all the ministerial measures, no salary was at first annexed to any of the East India commissioners ; who being six in number, were selected from such privy councillors as held efficient offices of other kinds. The treasurer'ship of the navy demanding comparatively little time or attention for transacting its duties, Dundas remained at liberty to bend all the force of his faculties to the administration of India. Patronage there was not indeed any vested by law in the board : but the court of directors and the two chairmen could not well be inattentive to the wishes, however indirectly or guardedly expressed, of a person who exercised such superintending powers over them and their possessions. The board of trade, abolished only two years earlier, by Burke's *bill*, being likewise re-established nearly at the same time, though under another name, and without any salaries ; Dundas was appointed one of its members. A far more extensive range lay, however, open to his ambition, in

the secret management of his native country, Scotland; almost all the parliamentary or borough interest of which kingdom became gradually attracted into his vortex. Of course, the favours of the crown to the north of the Tweed, passed through his hands, and were almost exclusively conferred through his interest. If it was asserted of the first Mr. Pitt, that "while he crushed with his right hand the two branches of the house of Bourbon, he wielded in his left the democracy of England;" it might be said with equal truth, though with less sublimity, of Dundas, that while he controlled the British dominions in India with one hand, with the other he managed and regulated Scotland.

The opposition—which party always affected to treat him as a venal deserter, who, after successively quitting Lord North and Lord Shelburne, had only attached himself to Mr. Pitt from the suggestions of a well-weighed and calculating ambition,—emptied their quiver of lampoons and satire upon him. But they found his hide impenetrable; fenced with good-humour, protected by great abilities, strength of character, and corresponding manliness of mind. The "Rolliad," holding him up to public reprobation, describes Dundas as a man

" Whose exalted soul

No bonds of vulgar prejudice controul.

Of shame unconscious in his bold career,

He spurns that honour which the weak revere.



For, true to public virtue's patriot plan,

He loves the *minister*, and not the *man*.

Alike the advocate of North and wit,

The friend of Shelburne, and the guide of Pitt."

Nor did his political enemies satisfy themselves with inveighing against his tergiversation, and the interested versatility with which he supported three different administrations, in three successive years. They pursued him into private life, and depicted him as a determined votary of pleasure. In one of the "Political Eclogues," entitled "*Rose, or The Complaint*," parodied from Virgil's "*Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin*," and published in 1785; the author, observing on the predilections of some distinguished persons about London, well known by their gallantries, says,

"What various tastes divide the fickle town!

One likes the fair, and one admires the brown.

The stately, Queensb'ry; Hinchinbrook, the small:

Thurlow loves servant-maids; Dundas loves all."

Notwithstanding this intellectual artillery perpetually discharged on him, he kept firm his steady way; looking, like Jenkinson, straight forward to the British peerage, as the distant, but certain remuneration of his public exertions. Nor could Pitt have discovered a more able, efficient, laborious, and eloquent coadjutor than Dundas, if he had sought throughout his majesty's dominions. That he wanted the correct and measured deportment, the elevated disinterestedness,



and the insensibility or superiority to female seductions, by which qualities the first minister was distinguished, we must admit: but he possessed, on the other hand, many endowments of mind, or of disposition, vainly sought in the chancellor of the exchequer. Dundas manifested more amenity of manner, more placability of temper, more facility of access; a more yielding, accommodating, and forgiving nature. If Pitt subdued, Dundas conciliated, adversaries. The latter, who had received his political education, and imbibed his parliamentary habits, under Lord North; breathed a more liberal spirit, more comprehensive in its embrace, and more calculated to gain or to disarm his opponents. Pitt was undoubtedly capable of firm and fervent friendships; yet Dundas, with less sincerity, acquired more general good will. Pitt was cold and repulsive: Dundas invited approach. The former seldom made advances, mingled a gravity or a constraint even with his civilities, seemed to weigh his expressions, rarely provoked or prolonged conversations, and speedily retired into himself. The latter was always communicative; and the lineaments of his countenance, open, as well as gay, facilitated his objects, even when he most concealed his purposes. Pitt appeared as if made to withhold, Dundas to confer, ministerial favours. Many of those recompences or remunerations, denominated in vulgar language *jobs*, unfortunately necessary among us

in order to keep adherents in good humour, and which flowed from the state fountain in Downing-street, were distributed, not by Pitt, but by the treasurer of the navy.

I knew with great intimacy, during more than thirty years, a lady, whose fortune not equalling her rank,—for she was a peeress in her own right, of very antient creation,—found herself compelled to have recourse to the fountain in question. Her eldest son having expended much time and money in raising, forming, and disciplining a corps of yeomanry cavalry, during the revolutionary war, previous to the treaty of Amiens; his mother made many applications to the treasury, with a view to obtain for him a pension, of which assistance he stood greatly in need. Wearied with ineffectual solicitations, she addressed herself to Dundas, and obtained an appointment to wait on him at Somerset House. She was punctual to the hour named; and the first thing that she did after entering the apartment, (as she herself assured me,) was to turn the key in the door. “You see,” said she, “that I am in earnest, and determined to be heard.” Having by his desire detailed the case, to which he listened with the utmost patience, politeness, and good humour, she concluded by demanding, in pressing terms, the aid of a pension for her son. “How much, madam, must you have?” asked Dundas. “I ask for five hundred pounds a year,” answered

she. "It is reasonable," replied he, "and it shall be done." In effect, her son obtained it immediately afterwards, without further trouble, upon public grounds, as having merited it by his exertions in the common cause of defending the country. I am well aware that pensions were sometimes obtained by ladies, through Mr. Dundas, on principles less patriotic; where beauty, high connexions, or personal predilection, aided the application. I could name instances in proof of my assertion. Nor could Scotland have been reduced under his influence without having recourse to similar expedients; by which, in the course of a few years, nearly forty, out of the forty-five members sent to the house of commons from North Britain, might be said to owe their seats to the treasurer of the navy. I ought, however, here to add, that in the list of ministerial benefactions he eminently distinguished the literati of his own country; almost all of whom received, through his protection or recommendation, marks of the bounty of the crown. Pitt by no means extended equal patronage to English genius or literary talents.

Precisely about this time, a lady was presented at court, and on the theatre of public life, who attracted universal attention. I mean, Mrs. Hastings. She was born, I believe, in his Britannic Majesty's electoral dominions; and had been early married to Mr. Imhoff, who, as well as herself,



was a German. Being by profession an historical and a portrait painter, he came over to England; bringing with him his wife, who was at that time young, captivating in her person, and possessing many graces. Madame Schwellenbergen, one of the two keepers of the robes to the queen, herself a native of Germany, and who has performed no inconsiderable part during the present reign, at Windsor, as well as at St. James's, patronized the Imhoffs. At her solicitation, her majesty was induced to extend to them a degree of protection, which procured for them from the directors of the East India Company permission to go out to Madras. The hope of acquiring by his pencil a more rapid fortune in Asia than he could probably expect to gain in Europe, induced him to embark for India, in the winter of 1768; and it happened that Mr. Hastings, whom the East India Company had recently named second in council at Fort St. George, took his passage on board the same vessel with Mr. and Mrs. Imhoff. At that time he had never seen or heard of her; but, shortly after sailing from England, accident, which had brought them into the same ship, made them personally known to each other. Hastings having engaged the room denominated the *round-house* for his own exclusive accommodation, Mrs. Imhoff, believing him to be on the quarter-deck, without previously ascertaining the fact, mounted by the stairs of the quarter-gallery

to that apartment. Their surprize at meeting was mutual; and she made, from the first instant of his seeing her, a deep impression on the future governor-general. In the course of their voyage, Hastings formed a very strong attachment to her; and his passion acquiring strength by time, he continued to visit her with great assiduity while she and her husband resided at Madras; but, always with such precautions, and under such restrictions, as not to compromise her honour. About the time when Hastings was appointed to the government of Bengal, in January 1772, a termination of her marriage with Imhoff took place; which union, as having been originally celebrated in Germany, was asserted to be capable of dissolution by mutual consent. This amicable divorce was not, however, effected without the aid of money, Hastings having, in fact, paid to Imhoff a sum considerably exceeding ten thousand pounds; with which acquisition the fortunate painter quitted India, and returning to his native country, there bought an estate out of the produce of his wife's attractions. Mrs. Imhoff followed her lover to Calcutta, and as soon as her former husband had transmitted authentic intelligence that the divorce was obtained, the new governor-general of India legalized his connexion by the solemnities of wedlock. During more than ten years that Hastings subse-



quently occupied the supreme authority on the banks of the Ganges, she remained there with him; was consulted by him on affairs of state; accompanied him in his visits to the upper provinces, particularly after the revolt of Cheyt Sing; and invariably maintained her ascendancy over his mind, as well as his affections. Nor did any censure ever attach to her conduct; unless we consider as such the accusation which her own and her husband's enemies raised against her, of amassing wealth by presents received from the native princes and princesses; which were usually conveyed under the form of diamonds, or other gems. It was asserted, that though Hastings might be poor or disinterested, yet his wife was rich and rapacious: but calumny, party, and political enmity, probably exaggerated the amount of these supposed accumulations.

As early as the year 1780, Hastings sent over Major Scott to England, in quality of his agent; and towards the close of 1783, meditating his own return from Bengal, he determined on letting Mrs. Hastings precede him; hoping that her presence and exertions might smooth many asperities, while she ascertained and prepared the ground for his speedy personal appearance in London. In his expectations from both these measures he found himself nevertheless deceived. Scott's zeal and publications, no less than his speeches and



defiances in parliament, injured the governor-general's cause, by irritating his political enemies. As little benefit resulted from Mrs. Hastings's appearance at St. James's, and in the circles of rank or fashion. Not that she was at all deficient in those accomplishments which adorn society : for, though she had already passed the limits of youth, her person still preserved many attractions. Her conversation was interesting, and her deportment unexceptionable in private life. But the nature of her marriage with Hastings, and all the circumstances which had produced that union, afforded so much subject for animadversion or scandal, as considerably to impede her introduction into the highest company. She was besides a stranger to England, by birth, by a long residence in Asia, and by her unacquaintance with our modes of life and our manners. Even her figure furnished matter for malevolent criticism ; as, at a time when every fashionable female's head-dress was elevated twelve or eighteen inches high, and formed a barbarous assemblage of powder, pins, and other fantastic ornaments piled on each other, she had the courage to wear her hair without powder. To this circumstance the " Probationary Ode of Major Scott" alludes, when describing Mrs. Hastings's presentation to the king and queen at the drawing-room. The portrait is highly coloured, but true to the original ; and the invocation to Pitt, replete with acrimony.

“ Gods ! how her diamonds flock

On each *unpowder'd* lock !

On every membrane see a topaz clings !

Behold, her joints are fewer than her rings !

Illustrious dame ! on either ear

The *Munny Begum's* spoils appear !

O Pitt ! with awe behold that precious throat,

Whose necklace teems with many a future *vote* !

Pregnant with *Burgage* gems each hand she rears ;

And lo ! depending *questions* gleam upon her ears !”

Her reception at court was most gracious ; nor could such a circumstance justly excite surprize, since his majesty made no secret of declaring the high opinion that he entertained of Hastings's public services.

I did not witness Mrs. Hastings's presentation at the drawing-room, having quitted England for Paris, where I made a stay of some weeks, a few days previous to the prorogation of parliament. The court of France still exhibited at that time a majestic and imposing appearance. No man, if wholly unacquainted with the secret causes of approaching convulsion, when surveying the aspect of the capital in September 1784, could have foreseen that within five years, the monarchy would be swallowed up in the abyss of a sanguinary and ferocious revolution. Still less, while assisting at the superb spectacle of Versailles, and its water-works, on a day of gala, when the king and queen dined in public, environed by all the pomp of majesty, could it have been supposed

that they would so soon be prisoners in the hands of their revolted subjects. It was, nevertheless, already apparent to those acquainted with the interior frame of the government, and the embarrassed state of the finances, that the materials of disorder and confusion were accumulating rapidly from various quarters. The people, inflamed, as well as perverted, by the writings of the French philosophers, aspired to freedom; wholly unconscious or ignorant that liberty cannot be preserved without public morals, and the severe restraints of law, under the strong control of an executive power. The nation, after contributing so successfully to emancipate America, began to demand its own emancipation, and the formation of a constitution. Unfortunately for the crown, the victories obtained in the Chesapeake, and the conquests made in the West Indies, when Necker was at the head of the finances, had eventually produced a deficit in the revenue; while Calonne, who presided over that department, since 1781, as controller-general, however eminent were his faculties, yet neither possessed the frugality, political steadiness, nor moral reputation, requisite for his arduous position. The united operation of these causes might nevertheless have been unquestionably obviated or dissipated, if the throne of France had been filled by a sovereign of any energy, decision, and determination. But, Louis the Sixteenth seemed to be raised up by Provi-



dence in its inscrutable dispensations, not less for the subversion of the French monarchy in our time, than his ancestor Henry the Fourth, two centuries earlier, appeared to be preserved by Heaven for the purpose of its extrication and restoration.

The king, at the time of which I speak, was thirty years of age, had reigned above ten since the death of his grandfather, and unquestionably possessed the affection and esteem of his subjects. During the first four years after his accession, while France remained at peace, from 1774 to 1778, every circumstance combined to diffuse a popularity round his person and government. Instead of a prince sinking into the grave amidst excesses of the worst description, surrounded by a haram, over which Madame du Barry presided; Versailles exhibited to the French nation and to Europe, a splendid court regulated by decorum, at the head of which a young, elegant, and accomplished queen, attracted universal admiration. Louis's correct manners, his conjugal attachment, his acknowledged rectitude of intention, and application to public business;—these features of his character and conduct formed a striking contrast with the enervate and dissolute state of degradation, in which Louis the Fifteenth terminated his long career. The recall of the parliaments, which assemblies had been exiled by his predecessor, was a measure

calculated to excite general satisfaction. His dismissal of the Abbé Terrai, one of the most unpopular ministers of the late reign, whom Louis the Fifteenth had placed at the head of the finances; and the nomination of Turgot to that office, a man possessing an elevated mind, as well as expanded and beneficent views for the amelioration of the revenue; endeared the young king to his people. The chancellor, Maupeou, whose shameless submissions to the Countess du Barry, some of which, too well authenticated, were at once so indecent and so licentious as hardly to obtain belief, or to be commemorated without degrading the dignity of history, was deprived of the functions of his office. Miromesnil, a lawyer of more decorous manners, if not of superior legal talents, became keeper of the great seal. Maurepas, placed at the head of the royal councils, superseded the Duke d'Aiguillon, whose name and administration had long been deservedly unpopular: while Vergennes, recalled for the express purpose from his embassy in Sweden, occupied the post of secretary of state for the foreign department. These salutary and judicious changes, made by a prince who had then scarcely attained to manhood, seemed to promise a fortunate reign, when his judgment, matured by experience, should enable him to assume a more active part in the administration of state affairs.

The four or five years that elapsed between

1778 and the beginning of 1783, during the whole of which period Louis was engaged in war with this country ; contributed to raise him in the estimation of his own people, and of foreign nations, by the success that generally accompanied his arms. For, though the last of those years, 1782, was attended with two great reverses ; namely, the naval defeat sustained by De Grasse, and the destruction of the Spanish batteries under the walls of Gibraltar ; yet every leading object for which the French government undertook the contest, was ultimately accomplished. The American colonies, under the protection of Louis, became a free and sovereign power. All the disasters experienced by France during the war of 1756, disappeared at York Town, where a British army surrendered to Washington and Rochambeau. In the East Indies, Suffrein contended, down to the last moment of hostilities, for the empire of the sea ; and though France restored to us, by the treaty of peace, most of the islands that she had reduced under her dominion in the West Indies, she retained Tobago, and resumed possession of St. Lucia : while Spain, fighting under the French banner, recovered Minorca and both the Floridas, which had been dissevered from her crown. Such were the brilliant occurrences of the first eight or nine years of a reign destined to so fatal a termination ; and which seemed strikingly to exemplify the picture drawn



by Gray, of Richard the Second, whose commencement, like Louis the Sixteenth's, excited high expectations ;

“ Fair laughs the morn, and gay the zephyr blows,  
While proudly riding o’er the azure realm,  
In gilded state the painted vessel goes,  
Youth at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm.  
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind’s sway,  
That, hush’d in grim repose, expects his evening prey.”

Louis the Sixteenth displayed many of the virtues that adorn private life ; few or none of the qualities that uphold the throne, when assailed by civil commotions. To George the Third he bore, in various respects, a strong moral resemblance ; but that similarity ceased altogether on the essential feature of energy, decision, and firmness of character. During the riots of the month of June 1780, which assumed some of the most alarming characteristics of the French revolution, the English king manifested a calm courage, and determination to die, if requisite, at his post, in defence of the power entrusted to him by the constitution. Louis, in July 1789, instead of repelling the infuriated mob which assailed him in his own palace, abandoned the reins of government. He may be said to have deposed himself. Even James the Second fled, and did not wait to be carried a prisoner to Whitehall. Louis suffered himself to be drawn from Versailles to Paris, a spectacle of fallen majesty ; insulted on his ar-

rival in his own capital, by Bailli, the mayor, who presented him sarcastically the keys of a metropolis which had already thrown off all allegiance. He had previously left the citadel of the Bastile, (which might easily have been rendered impregnable against any attack of the Parisians,) destitute of an adequate garrison, of provisions, or of ammunition. In October of the same year, he was ignominiously conveyed, with his queen and children, a dethroned captive, to the palace of the Tuileries; which residence he quitted, instead of defending it to the last extremity, as he ought to have done, and might have done successfully, on the 10th of August 1792. The different fate of the two sovereigns of England and of France has corresponded with their opposite characters. We behold the former prince, though deprived of his mental faculties, yet still reigning in the person of his son; after having not only preserved his own dominions from internal anarchy, or foreign invasion; but extended protection to France, to Spain, and to the great Continental powers, when struggling under the despotism of a revolutionary conqueror. The latter prince, a victim to his inert, irresolute, and yielding measures, perished on the scaffold, in front of his own palace.

In 1784, the vital defects of his monarchical character lay as yet in some measure concealed from general inspection. We may however assume with moral certainty, that the flight of the

princes of the blood, and the expatriation of many among the great nobility, at the very commencement of the revolution in 1789, would not have taken place, unless they had well known the weakness of the sovereign whom they abandoned to his fate. They doubtless were aware that he would neither defend himself, nor them, in the moment of danger. That the Count d'Artois, who was personally unpopular, and regarded as despotic in his principles, should have dreaded the effects of democratic violence, and should have fled from Versailles without waiting till matters arrived at the last extremity, might naturally be expected : but the Prince of Condé, in whom survived a portion of the heroism of his great ancestor, would never have deserted a king who had not first deserted his own cause. In fact, the reign of Louis the Sixteenth expired on the day of his passive transfer to Paris in October 1789, as much as that of Richard the Second terminated when he delivered himself up a prisoner in the castle of Flint, to his cousin, Henry of Lancaster. Instead of permitting a ferocious and sanguinary populace to drag him like a victim to the altar, if Louis would only have sent a party of cavalry to stop their passage across the Seine, at the bridges of Sèvres and of St. Cloud, he might have remained with perfect security in his palace. Or, if his aversion to shedding the blood of his subjects superseded every sentiment of self-preservation in



his bosom, he might have withdrawn with his family, as he was urged to do by more than one of his ministers, from Versailles to Rambouillet, and thence to Chartres. There he would have found himself protected by a considerable army. If then he had called on every man who loved his country, to join him against rebellion and anarchy ; while at the same time he had protested his readiness to concede to the nation, and to establish on the firmest foundations, a free constitution ; he might still have been seated on the throne of France. But, Louis, averse to resistance, seemed never to aspire to any crown, except that of martyrdom. Henry the Third's position on the 12th and 13th of May 1588, precisely resembled that of Louis the Sixteenth on the 5th and 6th of October 1789. The Duke of Guise, at the head of a rebellious body of forces, surrounded and menaced Henry in the Louvre, as La Fayette and the Parisian populace did Louis at Versailles. But, Henry, though long passive and irresolute, fled at last, and finally took up arms. Louis remained torpid, prohibited all defence, allowed himself to be conveyed as a captive to his capital, and suffered under the guillotine. He was his own executioner.

Two of the most interesting princesses whom the eighteenth century produced, and who will be considered as such by posterity, were unquestionably Maria Theresa, and Marie Antoinette,

of Austria; one, the mother; the other, the daughter; both, endowed with qualities fitted to sustain the throne in times of the greatest difficulty. The former, when driven from her hereditary dominions by the French and Bavarians in 1741, found resources in her own mind, which impelled her to resist, and ultimately enabled her to expel, her enemies. It is of *her* that Johnson speaks, when, depicting the calamities produced by ambition, as exemplified in the instance of the Bavarian emperor, Charles the Seventh, he says,

“ The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,  
Tries the dread summits of Cæsarian power;  
With unexpected legions bursts away,  
And sees defenceless realms accept his sway.  
Short sway! *Fair Austria* spreads her mournful charms;  
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms.”

With equal self-devotion and fortitude, no man can doubt, would the late ill-fated Queen of France have conducted herself during the course of the French revolution, if, like her mother, she had reigned in her own right. To Louis she might have justly said, as Catherine de Foix did to her husband John d'Albret, King of Navarre, nearly three centuries earlier; “ Si nous fussions nés, vous, Catherine de Foix, et moi, Don Jean d'Albret, nous n'aurions jamais perdu la Navarre.” More unfortunate even than Margaret of Anjou, wife of our Henry the Sixth; Marie Antoinette, after beholding, like the English

queen, her husband immolated, and her only son imprisoned by ferocious assassins, was ultimately conducted in a cart, with her hands tied behind her, as a common criminal, to the place of execution. In the autumn of 1784, she had nearly completed her twenty-ninth year. Her beauty, like the mother of Æneas, "*incessu patuit*." It consisted in her manner, air, and movements, all which were full of dignity as well as grace. No person could look at her, without conceiving a favourable impression of her intelligence and spirit. The king was heavy and inert, destitute of activity or elasticity; wanting all the characteristic attributes of youth; who, though not corpulent, yet might be termed unwieldy; and who rather tumbled from one foot to the other, than walked with firmness. His queen could not move a step, or perform an act, in which majesty was not blended. She possessed all the vigour of mind, decision of character, and determination to maintain the royal authority, which were wanting in Louis. Nor does it demand any exertion of our belief to be convinced, that she would have preferred death on the 10th of August, 1792, as she loudly declared, rather than have fled for shelter to the intimidated assembly which transferred her to the *Temple*. Her understanding was not highly cultivated, nor her acquaintance with works of literature extensive; but, her heart could receive and cherish some of the best



emotions of our nature. Friendship, gratitude, maternal affection, conjugal love, fortitude, contempt of danger and of death ;—all these, and many other virtues, however they might be choked up by the rank soil of a court, yet manifested themselves under the pressure of calamity.

While I do this justice to her distinguished intellectual endowments, and natural disposition ; the impartiality which I profess compels me to disclose her defects with the same unreserve. She had many ; some of them belonging to the *queen* ; others, more properly appertaining to the *woman*. Like the wife of Germanicus, she wanted caution, and due command over her words and actions. Descended, as she was, from a house which during successive centuries had been the rival and the inveterate enemy of France ; young, destitute of experience, surrounded by courtiers who dwelt upon her smiles ; she did not sufficiently appreciate the dangers of such an elevation, and she violated frequently the most ordinary maxims of prudence. Her high and haughty temper, made for dominion, impelled her to regard the people as populace ; and she seemed always to say while she looked round her,

“ Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo.”

This well-known feature of her character aggravated all the errors or mistakes of her conduct, and enabled detraction to accuse her with the

crime of being not only an Austrian by birth, but such in heart and inclination. So long as she had not produced a son, the imputation wore at least a semblance of probability; and a similar charge had been made in the preceding century, with some reason, against Anne of Austria. Louis the Thirteenth's consort was, in fact, pursued criminally by the Cardinal de Richelieu, for maintaining a treasonable correspondence with her brother, Philip the Fourth, King of Spain. The birth of a dauphin, who afterwards became Louis the Fourteenth, rescued Anne from ministerial prosecution: but Marie Antoinette, even after she had given an heir to the monarchy in 1781, and a second son in 1785, was still accused by popular malevolence, though most unjustly, of remitting pecuniary supplies to her brother, the Emperor Joseph the Second. Whatever might have been her predilections before she became a mother, we cannot doubt that subsequently to that event, she beheld only the interests of France before her eyes. Her judgment did not, however, equal the elevation of her mind. The expensive purchase of the palace of St. Cloud from the Duke of Orleans, in her name, was an act of great imprudence. Her contempt or disregard of appearances exposed her to severe comments; as did her strong partialities and preferences, manifested for various individuals of both sexes. The renunciation

which she made of etiquette, and her emancipation from court form, though calculated to heighten the enjoyments of private society, broke down one of the barriers that surrounded the throne. Her personal vanity, not to say coquetry, was excessive and censurable. She passed more time in studying and adjusting the ornaments of her dress, than became a woman placed upon the most dangerous eminence in Europe. Mademoiselle Bertin, who was her directress on this article, could indeed more easily obtain an audience of Marie Antoinette than persons of the first rank. Pleasure and dissipation offered for her irresistible charms.

But, was she, or was she not, it may be asked, a woman of gallantry? Did she ever violate her nuptial fidelity? Are we to rank her among the virtuous, or among the licentious princesses recorded in history? I am well aware that the illustrious female in question did not always restrain the marks of her predilection within prudent limits, and she thereby furnished ample matter for detraction. So did Anne Bullen; but, I imagine, there are very few, if any persons, who believe that the unfortunate mother of Elizabeth was false to Henry the Eighth's bed. I have personally known many of the individuals, commonly supposed or asserted to have been favoured lovers of the late Queen of France. Ignorance and malevolence furnished the princi-



pal, or the only proofs of criminality. Some of these men, thus distinguished, were foreigners and Englishmen. At their head I might place the late Lord Hugh Seymour, then the Honourable Hugh Seymour Conway, a captain in the navy. After the peace of 1783, when he was about twenty-five, he visited Paris and Versailles. Like all his six brothers, he exceeded in height the ordinary proportion of mankind; and he possessed great personal advantages, sustained by most engaging manners. The queen, who met him at the Duchess de Polignac's, among the crowd of eminent and elegant strangers there assembled, honoured him with marks of her particular notice, appeared to take a pleasure in conversing with him, and unquestionably displayed towards him great partiality. On this foundation was raised the accusation. I believe, the present Earl Whitworth made a similar impression on Marie Antoinette, about the same time. He, too, was highly favoured by nature, and his address exceeded even his figure. At every period of his life, queens, and duchesses, and countesses, have showered on him their regard. The Duke of Dorset, recently sent ambassador to France, being an intimate friend of Mr. Whitworth, made him known to the queen; who not only distinguished him by flattering marks of her attention, but interested herself in promoting his fortune, which then stood greatly in need of such a pa-

tronage. As Lord Whitworth is at this hour a British earl, lord-lieutenant of Ireland, decorated with various orders of knighthood, and one of the most distinguished subjects of the crown ; I shall digress from Marie Antoinette for a short time, in order to relate some particulars of his rise and elevation in life.

Lord Whitworth is about three years younger than myself, and must have been born in, or towards, 1754. His father, who had received the honour of knighthood, and was likewise a member of the house of commons, left at his decease a numerous family, involved in embarrassed circumstances. Mr. Whitworth, the eldest son, having embraced the military profession, served in the Guards, and attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel : but, I believe, was more distinguished during this period of his career by success in gallantries, than by any professional merits, or brilliant services. Soon after his thirtieth year he quitted the army ; and as his fortune was very limited, he next aspired to enter the *corps diplomatique*. The circumstance becoming known to the Queen of France, she recommended his interests strongly to the Duke of Dorset ; who, not without great difficulty, obtained at length in the year 1786, for his friend, the appointment of minister plenipotentiary to the court of Warsaw. I know from good authority, that when that nomination was bestowed on him, no little impediment to his de-

parture arose from the want of a few hundred pounds, to defray the unavoidable expences of his equipment. The unfortunate Stanislaus Poniatowski then reigned over the nominal monarchy of Poland, and Mr. Whitworth gave such satisfaction while residing at Warsaw in his public character, that on a vacancy occurring at Petersburgh about two years afterwards, he was sent as British envoy to Russia. During his residence of eleven or more years on the banks of the Neva, he received the order of the Bath, and was subsequently raised to the dignity of an Irish baron. But as very ample pecuniary resources were necessary for sustaining the dignity of his official situation, to support which, in an adequate manner, his salary as minister from the British court was altogether unequal, he did not hesitate to avail himself of female aid. Among the distinguished ladies of high rank about Catherine's person at that time, was the Countess Gerbetzow, who, though married, possessed a very considerable fortune at her own disposal. Such was her partiality for the English envoy, that she in a great measure provided, clothed, and defrayed his household from her own purse. In return for such solid proofs of attachment, he engaged to give her his hand in marriage; a stipulation, the accomplishment of which was necessarily deferred till she could obtain a divorce from her husband. Catherine's brilliant reign being closed, and her



eccentric successor having adopted those pernicious measures which within a short period of time produced his destruction, Lord Whitworth returned in 1800 to this country. He was then about fifty years of age, and still possessed as many personal graces as are perhaps ever retained at that period of life.

The Duke of Dorset, whose friendship had so eminently conduced to place Lord Whitworth in the diplomatic line, had already expired in July 1799, at his seat of Knole, in Kent. His decease was preceded by a long period of intellectual decay, or mental alienation, during the course of which, comprizing nearly twenty months, the duchess his wife discharged towards him, in a most exemplary manner, every conjugal duty and office. She was the eldest daughter of Sir Charles Cope, a baronet of Queen Anne's creation, and had completed her thirty-second year at the time when Lord Whitworth reached England. Her person, though not feminine, might then be denominated handsome; and, if her mind was not highly cultivated or refined, she could boast of intellectual endowments that fitted her for the active business of life. Under the dominion of no passion except the love of money, her taste for power and pleasure was always subordinate to her economy. The attachment of her late husband, aided by the decline of his intellect, had impelled him not only to exclude his nearest collateral heir,

the present Duke of Dorset, from the succession to any part of his landed estates ; but, in some measure, to sacrifice his own son to the interests of the duchess. In virtue of the duke's testamentary dispositions, she came into immediate possession of thirteen thousand pounds a year on his demise, besides the borough of East Grinstead during her life. So great an accumulation of wealth and of parliamentary influence had scarcely ever vested, among us, in a female, and a widow ; especially when Dorset House, in Whitehall, as well as Knole, the seat of the earls and dukes of that name ever since Elizabeth's reign, eventually passed into her hands. Lord Whitworth, though under such obligations to the duke's friendship, yet being personally unknown to the duchess, did not present himself at her door till towards the close of the year 1800. But the courtship was short, and they were married in the subsequent month of April.

Meanwhile, the Countess Gerbetzow, to whose attachment Lord Whitworth had been so deeply indebted while resident at Petersburg, and with whom he had contracted such serious contingent engagements, having succeeded in procuring a divorce from her husband, left that capital on her way to England. At Leipsic, she first read in one of the Continental newspapers, that the Duchess of Dorset's nuptials with Lord Whitworth were expected shortly to be celebrated;—

a piece of intelligence which, however unexpected or alarming it might be, only induced her to accelerate her journey. On her arrival in London, she learned that the union had already taken place. Irritated by disappointment and indignation, she had recourse to various expedients for obtaining restitution of the sums that she had advanced to her former lover, on the faith of his assurances of marriage. Her reclamations, which were of too delicate and serious a nature to be despised, when sustained by such proofs as she could produce in confirmation of them, at length compelled the duchess, most reluctantly, to pay her Muscovite rival no less a sum than ten thousand pounds; thus purchasing the quiet possession of a husband, as Mr. Hastings had bought the right to a wife, and nearly at as exorbitant a price.

However highly advantageous was such an alliance for a man whose private fortune was of the most slender description; yet his political career might probably have terminated at this period of his life, if the connexion existing between his wife and the family of Jenkinson had not given it a new impulse. Lady Cope, the duchess's mother, a woman of uncommon personal beauty, married a second time in 1782, the late Charles Jenkinson, subsequently created Earl of Liverpool. After the peace of Amiens in 1802, as it became necessary to send an ambassador to



the French republic, Lord Whitworth was selected for the employment. The vast pecuniary resources which his recent marriage afforded him, of sustaining the unavoidable expences incident to such a mission, unquestionably facilitated his nomination. It is, however, admitted that he acquitted himself with dexterity, calmness, and judgment, during the short and stormy period that he remained at Paris. On his return to England, not occupying a seat in either house of parliament, he sunk during ten years into comparative insignificance. But, in 1813, before which time the present Earl of Liverpool had attained to the head of the treasury, he was once more called, at the advanced age of sixty-three, into active public employment. The Duke of Richmond's period of office as lord-lieutenant of Ireland being terminated, Lord Whitworth received that high appointment, and was created at the same time an English *Viscount*. Two years later, Lord Liverpool included him among the seven individuals then raised to the dignity of *Earls*: while the duchess his wife had intermediately derived an augmentation of nine thousand pounds a year, in consequence of the calamitous death of her only son, the young Duke of Dorset, killed at the age of little more than twenty-one, in an Irish fox-chace. On this prodigious elevation stands Lord Whitworth at the present moment; — an elevation from which he may be said to

look down even upon Lord Gwydir, hitherto esteemed the most fortunate individual of our time. Three females of the highest rank, one of them a sovereign; namely, the late Queen of France, the Countess Gerbetzow, and the Duchess of Dorset; successively aided his progress in life. Without enquiring whether Johnson's remark on "ambitious love," as being rarely productive of happiness, can apply to the case before us; we may nevertheless be allowed to doubt whether a humbler matrimonial alliance might not have been attended with more felicity. If, on revisiting his native country, he had been united to a woman of inferior fortune and condition, who would probably have given him posterity; he would certainly have presented an object of more rational envy and respect, than as the second husband of a duchess, elevated by her connexions to dignities and offices, subsisting on her possessions, and who will probably ere long inter him with an earl's coronet on his coffin. I return to Marie Antoinette.

The late Duke of Dorset himself was by vulgar misrepresentation included in the list of that princess's pretended lovers. Unquestionably he enjoyed much of her regard and confidence, with proofs of both which sentiments she honoured him during his embassy in France. He preserved a letter-case, which I have seen, full of her notes addressed to him. They were written on private

concerns, commissions that she requested him to execute for her, principally regarding English articles of dress or ornament, and other innocent or unimportant matters. Colonel Edward Dillon, with whom I was particularly acquainted, was likewise highly distinguished by her. He descended, I believe, collaterally, from the noble Irish family of the Earls of Roscommon, though his father carried on the trade of a wine-merchant at Bordeaux. But he was commonly denominated "le Comte Edouard Dillon," and "le beau Dillon." In my estimation, he possessed little pretension to the latter epithet ; but he surpassed most men in stature, like Lord Whitworth, Lord Hugh Seymour, and the other individuals on whom the French queen cast a favourable eye. That she shewed him some imprudent marks of predilection at a ball, which, when they took place, excited comment, is true ; but they prove only indiscretion and levity on her part. Even the Count d'Artois was enumerated among her lovers, by Parisian malignity ; an accusation founded on his personal graces, his dissolute manners, and his state of separation, as well as of alienation, from his own wife. The hatred of the populace towards the queen became naturally inflamed by this supposed mixture of a species of incest with matrimonial infidelity ; and it was to the base passions of the multitude, that such atrocious fabrications were addressed by her enemies.



If Marie Antoinette ever violated her nuptial vow, (which, however, I am far from asserting,) either Count Fersen, or Monsieur de Vaudreuil, were the favoured individuals. Of the former nobleman, who was a native of Sweden, though of Scottish descent, I may hereafter have occasion to make mention. Vaudreuil had received from nature many qualities, personal and intellectual, of the most ingratiating description. The queen delighting much in his society, he was naturally associated to the parties at Madame de Polignac's, where her majesty never failed to be present. But there were other parties, in which Vaudreuil performed a conspicuous part, and respecting which I feel it impossible to observe a total silence; yet, of which it is difficult to speak without involuntarily awakening suspicions or reflexions injurious to the memory of that princess. They were called "descampativos;" being held in the gardens of Versailles; where, at a spot sheltered from view by lofty woods, about forty individuals, in equal numbers of both sexes, all selected or approved by the queen, repaired at the appointed time. An altar of turf being erected, the election of a high priest followed; who, by virtue of his office, possessed the power of pairing the different couples for the space of one hour, at his arbitrary pleasure. On pronouncing the word "descampativos," they all scampered off in different directions; being however bound by the compact to

re-assemble at the same place, when the hour should be expired. Those persons who maintained that the amusement was altogether innocent as far as Marie Antoinette had in it any participation, observed that the king repeatedly sanctioned it by his presence. They added, that he appeared to enjoy the diversion not less than any other individual of the company, and was himself repeatedly paired with different ladies. Vaudreuil generally performed the function of pontiff; and as that office conferred the power, not only of associating the respective couples, but of nominating his own partner, he frequently chose the queen. Her enemies, indeed, asserted, that one of her principal objects in setting on foot the diversion, was to overcome by temptation combined with opportunity, the scrupulous, as well as troublesome fidelity, observed by Louis towards her person and bed. In this expectation, they pretended, she was successful; partners, such as would not interpose any impediments or delays to his majesty's wishes, being selected for him by the high priest. That a *game*, or diversion, such as I have described, and other similar amusements which in common language we denominate *romps*, did occasionally take place at Versailles, or at Trianon, during the first years after Marie Antoinette became queen, when she was between twenty and twenty-five years of age, admits of no denial. I consider them nevertheless to have been

exaggerated by her enemies, and to have been at least as free from stain or guilt, as were the romping parties which, we know, our own Elizabeth permitted herself with Admiral Seymour, under her brother Edward's reign. Even Mary, Princess of Orange, afterwards Queen of William the Third, a most exemplary and virtuous woman, yet did not hesitate at two-and-twenty to receive instructions from the Duke of Monmouth, as her *dancing-master*, while he resided at the Hague, towards the end of Charles the Second's reign. The duke, it must be remembered, was the handsomest man of his time; and if we may credit contemporary authority, the petticoats of the *scholar* were adapted to the *lesson*. But, Louis the Sixteenth might exclaim with *the Moor*,

“ 'Tis not to make me jealous,  
To say—my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,  
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well:  
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.”

I do not, indeed, mean to maintain that the virtue of the late Queen of France can be placed on the same level with the honour of her two immediate predecessors on the French throne; namely, Maria Theresa of Spain, consort of Louis the Fourteenth; or Maria Leszinska of Poland, the wife of Louis the Fifteenth;—princesses so correct in their deportment, that detraction never ventured to impute to either of them the slightest deviation from propriety of conduct. But,



on the other hand, it ought not to be forgotten, that those queens, who fell far below Marie Antoinette in personal, as well as in mental endowments; who wanted all her graces, and powers of captivating mankind; were likewise, each of them, married to princes highly adorned by Nature, and cast in her finest mould. Louis the Sixteenth might inspire respect, or affection, or esteem; but did not appear, even at twenty, made to awaken sentiments of love. It demanded consequently a stronger principle of moral action to keep her in the right path, than might have sufficed in the two former instances. With Anne of Austria she may be more justly compared, whose conjugal virtue forms a subject of historic doubt; neither above suspicion, nor yet abandoned to censure. Like *her*, Marie Antoinette remained many years a wife before she became a mother. The birth of Louis the Fourteenth, born after more than two-and-twenty years of marriage; especially if we reflect on the extenuated state of Louis the Thirteenth at the time, whose whole life was a perpetual disease; might well excite doubts of his queen's fidelity, in the minds of her contemporaries. Marie Antoinette brought into the world a daughter before the expiration of the ninth year from the celebration of her nuptials; and the cause of her not having sooner gratified the expectations of the French, by giving heirs to the monarchy,—a fact which

was well known and ascertained,— depended, not on *her*, but on the king, her husband. Both princesses were handsome; both inclined to gallantry and coquetry. Anne of Austria manifested for Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, no less than for Mazarin, as strong a partiality, and committed acts as imprudent, as any which were ever attributed to the late Queen of France. She,— I mean, Anne of Austria,— passed likewise a great part of her life in total separation from her unamiable husband; while the utmost external harmony, if not real affection, always subsisted between Louis the Sixteenth and his consort. The balance of reputation between the two queens, inclines in favour of the latter princess. And how gloriously did she redeem the levities, or the indiscretions, committed at Trianon, and at Versailles; by the magnanimity which she displayed during her confinement in the Tuileries, at the Temple, and in the Conciergerie! What a display of conjugal duty, and maternal tenderness, did she not exhibit; what heroism and resources of mind, what superiority even to death, did she not manifest, while in the power of that atrocious mob of rebels and assassins, denominated the Republican Government! Whatever may have been the measure of her errors while in the splendour of royal prosperity, she will be ranked by posterity among the most illustrious, high-minded, and unfortunate princesses who have appeared in modern ages.

The Count de Provence, who now reigns under the name of Louis the Eighteenth, attracted in 1784, though so nearly allied to the throne, comparatively little national attention. In his person, and in his demeanour, he resembled the king his brother. Both were princes of sedentary habits; ill adapted for the energies of government in times of difficulty, and scarcely fitted for the ordinary representations of royalty. When resident, as he sometimes was, at Paris, the Count de Provence held his court at the Luxembourg Palace, over which the Countess de Balbi presided, though with far inferior influence than the Pompadours or the Barrys exercised under his grandfather's reign. At no period of his life did the sex acquire over him the empire possessed by the mistresses of Louis the Fourteenth and Fifteenth. As the Count and Countess de Provence neither had, nor were expected to have any issue, their marriage could be considered as little more than a nominal union. The Count d'Artois only, of the three brothers, was almost ever seen in the capital, where he occasionally resorted in pursuit of pleasure, when disgusted with the dullness, insipidity, and tranquillity of Versailles. His figure was fine, above the middle size, his countenance pleasing, and his manners corresponded with his appearance: but, unfortunately, these exterior advantages were unaccompanied with economy, prudence, or attention to conciliate ge-



neral esteem. He was not only supposed to be imbued with despotic principles, but his profusion had involved him in great embarrassments. During his visit to Gibraltar, two years earlier, where he repaired with the Duke of Bourbon, accompanied by some of the young French nobility, in expectation of making his public entry into that fortress after its assumed surrender, he had acquired no military reputation.

His excesses might seem to derive some apology from the conduct of his wife, who, however destitute of personal attractions, yet was accused of great irregularities. The proofs were even reported to have been so obtrusive, as to induce the court of Versailles to inform her father, Victor Amadeus the Third, King of Sardinia, that it was determined to send her back to Turin, in order that he might confine her in his own dominions. But his answer instantly repressed the intention. "I educated my daughter," replied he, "in the strictest precepts of virtue and of religion. She never had transgressed those rules when I gave her in marriage to the Count d'Artois. If his example or licentiousness, encreased by the general dissolution of manners in the court of France, has perverted the mind and morals of his wife; let those who have produced the evil support its consequences! I will not receive the princess, nor permit her to pass my

frontiers." So spirited and peremptory a refusal checked all further ideas of publicly disgracing her: but, after the birth of the dauphin in 1781, and of a second prince in 1785, she became almost extinct in the general recollection. Her husband no longer observed any measures towards her. At his beautiful retreat of "Bagatelle" in the "Bois de Boulogne," on the banks of the Seine, nearly midway between Versailles and Paris; where with great taste, and at a vast expence, he had assembled all that could minister to voluptuous enjoyment; the Count d'Artois, frequently accompanied by Mademoiselle Contat (at once the *Thais* and the *Thalia* of that period), passed many of his hours, unconscious of the gathering tempest. I have not seen, throughout Europe, an edifice where pleasure had concentrated more objects of gratification, heightened by the charms of sculpture, than were displayed in the apartments of "Bagatelle."

The Duke of Orleans, grandson to the celebrated and dissolute Regent of France, was far advanced at this time towards his sixtieth year. Destitute of energy of character, or of talents, moderate, unambitious, retired, he is hardly known to posterity, except as the father of a man whose criminal ambition eminently contributed soon afterwards to the subversion of the house of Bourbon, and of his country. The duke had been long united in a second marriage

with the Marchioness of Montesson, but the king refused to recognize her as Duchess of Orleans. Madame de Genlis, her niece, has commemorated the marchioness in various parts of her voluminous Memoirs. The splendid residence of the Dukes of Orleans, the "Palais Royal," placed in the centre of Paris, then contrasted strongly with the ruinous palace of the Louvre, and the deserted edifice of the Tuileries; both which structures, stretching along the bank of the Seine in neglected majesty, wholly unvisited by the sovereign, seemed to reproach his absence. The queen had indeed caused two or three apartments to be fitted up in the "Pavillon de Flore," at the extremity of one wing of the Tuileries; which commanded a charming view to the south, over the quays on both sides of the river. There she occasionally alighted, when amusement led her to visit Paris for a few hours; but, where she had scarcely ever passed even a single night, during fourteen years since her marriage. So totally abandoned by Louis the Sixteenth was his own capital, previous to the Revolution; and so unfit to receive him had the palace of the Tuileries become, in which he subsequently passed near three years; a nominal king, though in effect a prisoner, between 1789 and 1792! If the "Palais Royal" constituted, in 1784, the noblest inhabited fabric of the French metropolis; the palace and gardens of St. Cloud, which then be-



longed, not to the crown, but to the Duke of Orleans, presented a far more alluring aspect than the tame magnificence of Versailles, or the joyless and melancholy expanse of Marly. Its beautiful, cheerful, and picturesque position, on a fine eminence overhanging the Seine, with the capital in full view, yet exempt from its inconveniencies; the superb orangery, (since become classic *revolutionary* ground, in November 1799, when Bonaparte there seized on the government, and extinguished the Directory;)—lastly, the gardens and park, truly royal, extending on every side;—these features might fully justify the queen's predilection for St. Cloud. When, in addition to two such edifices, one situate in Paris, and the other placed at an inconsiderable distance from its gates, we add the prodigious patrimonial possessions of the Duke of Orleans, scattered throughout various provinces of France, from the shore of the British Channel to the mountains of Auvergne; we cannot hesitate in pronouncing him to have been the most powerful, wealthy, and elevated subject in Europe.

Removed by one gradation farther from the succession to the crown, the Prince of Condé might nevertheless be considered as hardly inferior to the Duke of Orleans, in all the attributes and accompaniments of grandeur. Descended as he was equally from *the great Condé*, and from the illustrious family of Montmorency,

which occupies so high a place in the history of France; in *him* the military spirit of the Bourbon line had not become extinct, as it seemed in some measure to have done in the king, and in the Count de Provence. He had served with distinction in Germany, during the war of 1756, under the late reign. The "Palais Bourbon," his residence at Paris, situate on the southern bank of the Seine, in a much more airy and salubrious part of the capital than the "Palais Royal," might almost vie with it in size and splendour. At Chantilly, the Prince of Condé maintained a state scarcely less than royal, surrounded by every monument of feudal magnificence, combined with all the refinements of the eighteenth century. His only son, the Duke of Bourbon, was little known except by his passion for the chace; while the Duke d'Enghien, second in lineal descent from the Prince of Condé, whose savage execution took place in our own time, had only completed his twelfth year. We must go back to the thirteenth century, in order to find a parallel to this atrocious act of blood, when young Conradin, heir to the crown of Naples, was beheaded by the tyrant Charles of Anjou. The Prince of Conti stood last in order among the collateral heirs to the throne; but he had no issue by his consort, a princess of Modena, and that branch of the royal line has since become extinct.

In 1784, when nearly eight hundred years had

elapsed since Hugh Capet was proclaimed King of France at Noyon, no less a number than fifteen princes, all of whom descended from him in the male line through Louis the Ninth, (commonly denominated St. Louis,) still remained; every one competent to wear the crown. So uninterrupted a succession through so many centuries, might well inspire that veneration which "the hoar of ages" invariably excites in the human mind. Every circumstance dear to recollection, and powerful over the affections, conspired indeed to render sacred the Capetian race. Charles the Fifth, and Charles the Seventh, had each in turn rescued France from the English yoke. Louis the Twelfth is known in history by the title of "Father of his People." To Francis the First was due the revival of letters and of arts. Henry the Fourth had expelled the Spaniards from Paris, and extinguished the rebellion of "the League." The love of glory, and the national vanity, had been gratified to their utmost extent, by the conquests, the ostentatious largesses, and the magnificence of Louis the Fourteenth. A filiation of such length in masculine descent, almost holds to prodigy, and has no parallel among the antient, or the modern crowned heads of Europe. We justly esteem as already old, the reigning house of Oldenburg, by which family the Danes have been governed in the male line ever since the middle of the fifteenth cen-



tury. Yet, how recent is their elevation to the throne of Denmark, if compared with that of Hugh Capet in the year 987; a period long anterior to the Norman Conquest! The circumstance appears even more entitled to admiration, if we contrast it with our own fugitive dynasties, which have followed each other in such rapid order, though all were perpetuated through females. To the three *Norman* princes, and the usurper Stephen, succeeded the *Angevin* or *French* sovereigns, whom we commonly call Plantagenets, though that name was, in fact, only a badge or distinction of chivalry; and who, amidst civil wars, caused by disputed titles, maintained themselves on our throne considerably above three hundred years. They were supplanted by a race of *Welsh* monarchs, sprung from a private gentleman of the Isle of Anglesea. We next passed under the dominion of a *Scottish* race, to whom a *Dutchman* was substituted, and we are now transferred to a *German* family. From Egbert down to George the Third, in the lapse of a thousand years, only one real *Englishman* properly so denominated, as sprung from a native stock, has reigned among us. I mean, the brave but unfortunate Harold, who, after struggling ten months against foreign invaders, fell by the stroke of an arrow, at the battle of Hastings, in 1066.—Nothing except the yielding and passive conduct of Louis the Sixteenth, who would not

resist or arrest insurrection, though he saw it organized for his destruction, could have overturned a throne so deeply established in opinion as was that of the Capets in France! He was not beheaded, like Charles the First, after having endeavoured to defend his prerogatives. Louis, more weak than Charles the Simple, who was dethroned in the tenth century, and died a prisoner at Peronne, or than our Henry the Sixth, seemed to tender his throat to the assassins.

Animal magnetism constituted at this time the rage in the French metropolis; of which pretended discovery, Mesmer and Deslon claimed the merit. Scarcely could Plato or Epicurus have boasted of more numerous or devoted followers, than did these empirics. Their school was crowded with disciples, proselytes, or patients, of both sexes, and of all ranks. Seated round a table, amidst the appalling magnetic apparatus, with minds already prepared or subdued to the arts of the operator, they waited for the shock, or as it was technically termed, the *crisis*.

To the celebrated Beaumarchais, the Parisians owed the obligation of charming their leisure by a dramatic exhibition of extraordinary interest. I mean the “Folle Journée,” or “Le Mariage de Figaro.” The scene is placed at Seville. There is in the very name of Spain something that always awakens ideas of adventure, gallantry, and intrigue:—impressions which *Gil Blas* and *Don*

*Quixote*, Le Sage and Cervantes, have tended to excite in the imagination. The "Beggar's Opera," when it first appeared in London, could not have been received with more enthusiasm, than was manifested for the production of Beaumarchais. *Figaro* attracted as many admirers as ever *Mac-heath* had done; and Lavinia Fenton, who played the part of *Polly*, which character raised her to the rank of Duchess of Bolton, could not exceed the licentious graces displayed by Mademoiselle Contat, in *Suzanne*. I was present several times at the performance, with increased pleasure; though, on account of various expressions or allusions contained in it, the author and the comedy lay equally under the displeasure of the court.

Among the objects of curiosity then to be seen at Paris, was the shirt which Henry the Fourth wore when he received his mortal wound from the hand of Ravillac, on the 14th day of May 1610. It was exhibited at a booth on the "Boulevard de Bondi," accompanied with every attestation that could identify it as the shirt of Henry; which, having become at the time a perquisite of his first valet of the bedchamber, had been conveyed with care to his descendants, and on their extinction, was finally exposed to sale. The shirt was composed of cotton, ornamented with a broad lace round the collar and the breast. But the circumstance that seemed most to prove its identity, was the sight of the two fractures or



lacerations produced by the assassin's knife. One was comparatively small; while the other, corresponding with the region of the heart, disclosed a larger rent or orifice. We know that Ravallac gave the king two stabs: the first, on the ribs, when the weapon glanced off without inflicting a deep wound; the second transfixed the heart, and deprived him of life almost on the moment; he being suffocated in his own blood, before the coach in which he sate could reach the palace of the Louvre, at the distance of a few hundred paces. I have seen the shirt worn by Charles the First on the scaffold, preserved at Lord Ashburnham's seat, in Sussex; which was transmitted to posterity by a collateral ancestor of the present earl, who, as one of the grooms of the bedchamber, attended Charles on the 30th of January 1649. Both these shirts appeared to have been originally almost steeped in blood, though time has discharged from them the crimson colour: but they do not produce a similar effect on the mind. Charles's catastrophe, like that of Louis the Sixteenth, excites just compassion. Of Henry it may be asserted with truth, that though the defects of his character were great, he nevertheless occupies the highest place in our esteem and affection among the kings who have reigned in modern Europe. Notwithstanding the degree of idolatry which the French profess for his memory, we may justly remark, that in the lapse of more than

two hundred years since his assassination, no prince of the blood royal has ever been christened by the name of Henry, till Louis the Eighteenth so named the Duchess of Berri's son. We learn from the "*Mémoires de St. Simon*," and from other authentic sources, that even the bare mention of his illustrious grandfather was painful to the bigoted ears of Louis the Fourteenth. The deadly spot of Hugonotism, ineffaceable in the estimation of monks and jesuits, adhered to Henry, like the poisoned shirt of Nessus, even after his re-admission into the catholic church; and cancelled or obscured his heroic exertions for the extrication of France from foreign and domestic enemies. Nor did Louis, environed with the pomp of Versailles, recollect without repugnance, how humble were the little courts of Pau and of Nerac, concealed among the mountains of the Pyrenees, in the distant province of Gascony; where Henry passed his youth, an exile and a heretic, proscribed or persecuted by the last kings of the race of Valois.

Another monument which arrested my attention, was the Castle of Vincennes. During the course of ten years since Louis the Sixteenth's accession in 1774, many of the state prisons had been successively suppressed and extinguished; a measure originating in the progressive spirit of political freedom throughout the nation, which required a relaxation of the antient despotism.

Among the objects of abolition and of retrenchment, these receptacles of human misery presented themselves to the consideration of the Baron de Breteuil, minister of the interior. On his representation, it was determined to make a reduction in their number throughout France, and the great tower, or "*donjon*" of the Castle of Vincennes was among the first of that description thrown open to curiosity. I visited it twice; the last time in company with the present Lord Gwydir, then Sir Peter Burrell. Several days had been employed, by order of the government, in erasing the inscriptions left on the walls of the various chambers or cells, before they were submitted in 1784 to the public eye. The genius of History seemed to accompany the visitor of this Gothic palace through the dark and winding passages; reminding him at every step, of the events that had taken place within its gloomy recesses. Here expired our Henry the Fifth in 1422, of a disease which had nearly cut short Louis the Fourteenth's career, but which the advanced state of surgical skill in the seventeenth century enabled him to surmount. Henry disappeared at the moment when he was about to ascend the throne of France, and in the full vigour of his age. Like Alexander in antiquity, he died at thirty-three; withdrawn by Providence, as if in mercy to the French and English nations. To the former, as by his decease, and the long minority of his feeble



son, the Capetian line reconquered their heritage. Not less fortunately for *us*, since the greatest national calamities would necessarily have resulted from the annexation of England to the French monarchy. Under such circumstances, if the two countries could have permanently remained beneath the dominion of one sovereign, Paris must have become the principal seat of government, while London would have sunk, like Dublin, into the mere residence of a viceroy.

Here too, at Vincennes, Charles the Ninth of France breathed his last in 1574, before he had accomplished his twenty-fifth year. A prince, whose name, on account of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, which took place under his reign, is never pronounced without detestation; but, who possessed many qualities worthy the throne; courage, vigilance, activity, energy, and a love of the fine arts in all their branches,—not less ardent than inspired his grandfather Francis the First; if these noble seeds had not been choaked and perverted to purposes of destruction, by his mother, Catharine of Medicis! I contemplated with no common interest, another vaulted apartment of considerable size, in which “the great Condé,” his brother the Prince of Conti, and their brother-in-law the Duke de Longueville, were confined during near thirteen months, by Cardinal Mazarin, in 1650, and the following year. It is curious to reflect that the illustrious prince, who annihili-

lated the Spanish bands at Rocroy, and whose triumphs constitute so brilliant a part of the French annals, should have passed much of his youth and middle life in prison, in exile, or in rebellion, amidst privations of every kind. My conductor did not omit to point out to me the parapet from which Francis, Duke de Beaufort, grandson of Henry the Fourth, by Gabriel d'Estree, effected his escape, in 1648, from this fortress, after having been shut up in it more than five years, by order of Anne of Austria, then regent of France. He occupied a distinguished place in the civil wars of the "Fronde," under Louis the Fourteenth's minority, but is otherwise hardly known to posterity. Among all the descendants of Henry by Gabrielle, the Duke de Vendôme alone, his great grandson, who, at the commencement of the last century, commanded the armies of Philip the Fifth in Spain with so much glory, seemed to inherit any portion of Henry's military talents. Philip remarking to him this circumstance, and observing that neither his father nor grandfather had been distinguished in the field, "Sire,"—answered the duke, "*c'est que je tire mon génie de plus loin.*"

Among all the attributes or instruments of despotism, there is not one which impresses the mind with more abhorrence, or awakens images of a more hateful description, than a state prison. Bonaparte, contemplated in the character of a

destroyer, is not equally odious, as when we see in him a jailor. Perhaps we should not exaggerate, if we assume that in the progress of his flagitious invasion of Spain, and in the calamitous retreat from Moscow, he sacrificed to his policy, to his ambition, or to his enmities, half a million of human beings. Yet does he excite far more detestation, when his name is coupled with those of the Duke d'Enghien, of Toussaint-L'Ouverture, of Pichegru, and of Captain Wright; all of whom we suppose to have been sacrificed in different ways, by his secret orders, in the gloom of their cells. When Gray exclaims,

“ Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,  
With many a foul and midnight murder fed !”

we seem to behold passing before us the shades of those royal and noble victims, who in different ages have there fallen beneath the dagger, or by more concealed and atrocious means. Such as the Tower of London is described by Gray, were the castles appropriated to the reception of state criminals under Louis the Thirteenth, when Cardinal Richelieu filled them with the first nobility of France. Many of the memoirs written during that period of time, and transmitted to us, were composed by persons immured in the Bastile, or at Vincennes. The arbitrary temper of Louis the Fourteenth, inflamed, during the last thirty years of his reign, by a spirit of intolerant bigotry, maintained the same detestable system, and



crowded with unfortunate individuals, the fortresses allotted for their detention. We may see in the charming Memoirs of Madame de Stahl, who was herself a prisoner in the Bastile, how full were its apartments between 1717 and 1720, during the regency of the Duke of Orleans. The conspiracies of various kinds, set on foot under the auspices of Philip the Fifth, King of Spain, in order to dispossess that prince of the supreme authority in France, compelled him, contrary to his natural disposition, to immure his enemies in the various castles scattered throughout the French territories. Louis the Fifteenth, indolent, as well as unfeeling in his natural disposition; and towards the conclusion of his career, lost, like Tiberius at Capræa, to shame and to public decorum; allowed his ministers or his mistresses to issue "*lettres de cachet*," on the slightest pretences. But the natural benignity of his successor, however torpid, led him to reject all measures of severity. It was more in consequence of the relaxation of the royal power, than from the exertion of its despotism, that the monarchy was first shaken, and finally subverted. When, in July 1789, the insurgent populace, aided by the "Gardes Françaises," burst into the Bastile, they found throughout that edifice only seven captives. A century earlier, in 1689, if a similar insurrection had taken place, every subterranean dungeon, cell, and chamber, on the different

floors, up to the *calottes* or circular vaulted rooms in which the towers all terminated, would have exhibited one or more unfortunate tenants. So much had the humane character of the monarch, aided by the spirit of the times, already mitigated the kingly authority, previous to the commencement of the French revolution !

Conversing, in the month of June 1798, with Sir Sydney Smith, who was then in London, relative to his detention in the *Temple*, from which prison he had effected his escape only about four weeks ; he assured me that in the room which had been occupied by Louis XVI. where he was himself confined during three-and-twenty months, there remained no inscription, trace, or vestige of that ill-fated prince,—so carefully had they been all erased. But, he added, that he had himself left, in a very obscure corner of the chamber, a short note addressed to Bonaparte ; who, he doubted not, would, sooner or later, succeed him there. He repeated to me the words of the billet, which contained some advice to Napoleon, accompanied with very severe animadversions on the conduct of the Directory. Sir Sydney told me that the jailor or keeper of the *Temple* had allowed him to sup in Paris, not less than twelve different evenings, during his abode in that prison. On these occasions, he always pledged his word of honour to be there again by a certain hour, never exceeding half-past nine ; and he fulfilled his en-

gagement with scrupulous exactitude. Little difficulty, he said, was experienced in getting him out of the Temple ; but very great precautions became necessary to secure his return *into* it, undiscovered.—Nearly about the same period, I had more than one conversation with Lieutenant Wright, Sir Sydney's brave and unhappy comrade, who had been shut up with him in the Temple. As he was captured with Sir Sydney at the time when the frigate having grounded near the mouth of the Seine, not far from Havre de Grace, surrendered to the enemy ; so he likewise recovered his liberty in May 1798. On the 15th of the following month, I called on Mr. Wright at the Prince of Wales's Hotel, Conduit-street, Hanover-square, when he made me the following recital. "I was confined," said he, "for nearly two years, in the room where the unfortunate Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, had been immured. My first employment was to ascertain by a most minute and accurate search over every part of the chamber, whether either she, or her daughter, or the Princess Elizabeth her sister-in-law, had left behind them any memorial of their residence. After the strictest examination, I could discover only two such indications. The first was an inscription, as I apprehend, in the queen's hand-writing, and contained these few words :

‘La tour du Temple est l'Enfer.’

Near it were two marks, one above the other,



scratched on the wall, which, I imagine, indicated the respective height of her two children. The second inscription, which had been pricked or delineated by Madame Royale, was to this effect :

‘ Marie Therese Charlotte est la plus malheureuse  
personne du monde. Elle ne peut pas recevoir des  
nouvelles de son pere, ni de sa mere, quoique  
elle *l'est* demandé milles fois.’

No doubt, these lines were written subsequent to the separation of that unhappy family.”

I copied them, as they here appear, from the original paper in Sir Sydney Smith’s possession. The inaccuracies of expression, by which the princess used *recevoir* instead of *procurer*, and the word “*l'est*” where she should have written “*l'ait*,” when venting her woes, like the daughter of Pandion, to the walls of her prison ;—these errors cannot surprize, if we reflect that she was only thirteen years and eight months old at the time when she accompanied her father and mother to the Temple. After that lamentable day, her mind could not have been in a state to receive many aids of education or improvement.

Before I quit the subject of the Temple, I cannot help remarking on the singular fact of Napoleon’s having demolished that edifice to the last stone. I visited the spot where it once stood, three times in the course of the year 1816. Grass now covers the place ; and small stakes, driven into the ground, from one to the other of which cords are

stretched, mark the exact figure, as well as dimensions, of the two turrets where the king, queen, and royal family were confined. Not a remain of the antient structure exists, more than survives of Babylon or of Troy. What were the motives that impelled the Corsican emperor to level it with the earth? Certainly, not attachment, or respect, or commiseration for the Bourbons, whom he persecuted, dreaded, and destroyed when they fell into his power. It can only be explained on the supposition, universally credited at Paris, that he regarded the castle which had immured the last sovereigns of the Capetian line, as a building of evil omen, on which he feared to fix his eyes; within whose walls, that had so often witnessed the piercing lamentations of the illustrious captives there detained, a change of fortune might at any moment confine himself. He therefore commanded and completed its demolition.

The English ministers of the year 1815 have incurred some censure for having transferred Napoleon, when he threw himself on their generosity, to a rock in the other hemisphere. But, what fortress could securely hold an individual of such colossal dimensions? Happily, *we* have no state prisons. Neither Dumbarton Castle, nor the Tower of London, would have been a safe place of detention. A popular commotion might set him free at any moment, and place him at the head of a revolutionary army in the centre of the



kingdom. The consciousness that he existed in the midst of us, must have operated of itself to produce insurrection. It was of the last necessity, to remove him to a distance from Europe. But, to irritate him, after his fall, by perpetual insults; to send out a governor for the express purpose, and to accelerate his end by premeditated acts of unnecessary severity;—for these infractions of humanity, our ministers must answer to posterity.

*October.*—A singular accident befell the king soon after my return from Paris to London, which, however, was happily unattended with any injurious consequences. During the whole course of his reign, as he discharged scrupulously the great duties imposed on him by Providence, when he was placed at the head of the British empire and constitution; so he did not fail in regularly performing the minor obligations required of him in his kingly character. Among the latter functions, was comprehended the act of holding levees and drawing-rooms. With such punctual and unremitting accuracy did he receive the compliments of his nobility and gentry at St. James's, that, during winter, two weekly levees always took place; namely, on the Wednesday and the Friday; to which was added a third, during the meeting of parliament after Christmas, on Mondays, intended particularly for members of the house of commons. The queen gene-



rally held her drawing-room every Thursday throughout the winter, at which his majesty never failed to be present; thus devoting a large portion of four mornings out of seven, for a great part of the year, to this tiresome ceremony. It must, however, be owned that no prince ever seemed to suffer less, while so employed, than George the Third. Far from endeavouring to accelerate its termination, he always appeared desirous of prolonging it. I have frequently seen him detain the queen more than half an hour, after she had done the honours of the circle, and seemed extenuated with fatigue, while he engaged in an endless *tête-à-tête* with a foreign minister or an agreeable courtier. No princess in Europe conducted herself with more suavity, ease, and condescension, in her own drawing-room, than did her present majesty. In that act, as in every other throughout her whole life, she has evinced excellent common sense, great command over herself, and admirable judgment. During more than half a century that she has resided in this island, placed continually in most delicate and difficult circumstances, she has not made a single false step. In consequence of the frequency and regularity of levees, they were often thinly attended; and it was not unusual for the king, who always came early to St. James's, to find himself ready for commencing the ceremony before a sufficient number of per-

sons had assembled for the purpose. He then usually sent out the groom of the bedchamber in waiting, to reconnoitre the ground, and to report to him on the subject. His levees were held (most appropriately) in a bedchamber of very moderate dimensions, joining the *closet*, properly and technically so denominated, into which he generally retired when the levee concluded. That bedchamber might with reason be deemed classic ground, as in it took place the birth of James the Second's son, in 1688. The foreign ministers ranged themselves, at the levees of George the Third, from the fireplace, along the foot of the bed. With those representatives of crowned heads, his majesty rarely failed to enter into diffuse conversations; so that by the time he approached the door of the apartment, he commonly found a great crowd pressing for notice. As he talked with one individual, he cast his regards, from time to time, on the person who stood next; thus anticipating, and preparing himself, before he began a new dialogue.

I observed that an accident befell the king, which might have been followed by serious consequences. It happened in the following manner. Towards the beginning of October, his majesty, whose punctuality in holding his levees I have already noticed, leaving Windsor, set out on horseback from the Queen's Lodge, at half-past eight on a Wednesday morning, notwithstanding



the very threatening aspect of the weather. He was only attended by Major Manners, (now the general of that name,) who happened to be his equerry in waiting, and a groom. Before they reached Colnbrook, it began to rain with violence; but the king, wrapping himself in his great-coat, pushed on at greater speed. As he passed over Turnham Green, a countryman, dressed in a common smock-frock, mounted on a sort of cart-house, and advancing at the rate of six or seven miles an hour, encountered him. His majesty attempting to pass between him and a loaded waggon going towards London, received a blow on one of his knees from the man, and had nearly been thrown upon the waggon. Major Manners, who was close behind, and who saw the accident without being able to prevent it, riding up to the fellow, while he doubled his horsewhip, after some execrations, exclaimed, "You scoundrel, don't you see it is the king?" The unfortunate countryman, thus rudely accosted, remaining motionless and speechless, while Manners and the servant both seemed about to inflict chastisement on him; the king instantly interposed. "Don't strike him on any account," said his majesty. "He has hurt my knee; but it was altogether an accident. I shall receive no injury from it." So saying, he continued his journey towards London. General Manners assured me, that on looking back, so long as he could perceive the man,



he remained still nearly in the same attitude and posture, like a person overcome with amazement, in the middle of the high road. Before noon his majesty arrived at the queen's house, and his first endeavour was exerted to procure some arquebusade: but, in consequence of the violence of the rain, all the domestics assuming as certain that he would come in a carriage, and would drive straight to St. James's, scarcely any person could be found in attendance. A maid-servant having at length brought him the arquebusade, his majesty pulled down his stocking; and while Manners held the bottle, the king rubbed his knee, which was black, and had received a great contusion. But, after having plentifully bathed the part affected, he immediately got into his sedan chair, repaired to St. James's, dressed himself, and held his levee, precisely as though no misadventure had befallen him.

*November.*—In the autumn, the king, availing himself of Lord Waldegrave's decease, who was colonel of the Coldstream regiment of Guards, conferred the command on his own second son, Prince Frederic. About a month subsequent, his majesty created him Duke of York and Albany; by the former of which titles he has since been known, instead of Bishop of Osnabrugh, as he was previously designated in common conversation. Desirous to remove him from the society of his elder brother, and at the same time to ren-

der him acquainted with Germany, particularly the Electoral dominions; George the Third, as early as the close of the year 1781, had sent him over to Hanover. From that city, which constituted his residence and his head-quarters, he made occasional excursions to the Prussian, Saxon, and Austrian courts; with a view principally to the attainment of military knowledge, in order that he might in due time fill the important post of commander-in-chief, destined for him by his father. George the Second had in like manner placed his second son at the head of the British army. That the present king, from a very early age, regarded Frederic with predilection, is a fact too well known to need any proof. Nor can we wonder at his feeling a preference towards a prince, in whose person, manners, and the leading features of his character or deportment, he beheld himself much more faithfully reflected than in the Prince of Wales.

The political sky being now calm, and the first minister confirmed in power, towards the conclusion of November two creations took place, on which the eyes of the whole kingdom were turned with interest. I have already had occasion to remark, that with the late Marquis of Rockingham, who died in July 1782, expired the gradation or title of marquis in this country. During nearly two years and a half, that rank of the peerage was, if I may so express myself,

blotted out of the Red Book of England, while three marquises then existed in Scotland. In Ireland the title had never been introduced. To this rank, therefore, Earl Temple and the Earl of Shelburne were now raised. The former nobleman, who stood in a close degree of consanguinity to the chancellor of the exchequer,—besides his hereditary claims, and his vast landed property, sustained by great parliamentary interest, might justly plead his recent services to the sovereign. He first of all the nobility in the realm, having demanded an audience of the king, had disclosed to him the dangerous nature of Fox's "East India Bill," and its provisions as they regarded the crown; facts which impelled his majesty to adopt vigorous measures for arresting its further progress. The title of Buckingham was conferred on him; which as a dukedom awakens recollections that carry us back to the Tudor, and even to the Plantagenet times. It was revived by James the First, in the person of his favourite Villiers. Queen Anne bestowed, on Sheffield Earl of Mulgrave, the dukedom, not of Buckingham, but of Buckinghamshire. In consequence of Lord Temple's being raised to the marquise, the Earl of Buckinghamshire, who had been previously accustomed to omit the last syllable, and to call, as well as to sign himself *Buckingham*, became compelled to resume the former denomination and signature: a necessity



with which he somewhat reluctantly complied. The Marquis of Buckingham, like his two younger brothers, possessed strong intellectual powers, sustained by a most retentive memory, by habits of application, and inexhaustible information upon almost every subject. While lord-lieutenant of Ireland, during the Earl of Shelburne's administration, I believe he gave as much satisfaction to the nobility and people of that island, as any man could do whose disinclination to wine or conviviality led him to pass little time at table, and to devote himself almost entirely to the labour of the cabinet. His faculties appear nevertheless to have been adapted more to ornament private life, than for conducting public business. By his hasty acceptance of the post of secretary of state, in December 1783, and his still more hasty resignation of it, scarcely forty-eight hours afterwards, he had nearly upset Pitt's administration before it was well constituted. To the office of first lord of the admiralty, he always anxiously aspired; but Fortune was not equally propitious to his wishes, as she had shown herself to those of the Duke of Richmond, in placing him at the head of the ordnance. During Pitt's long ministry, Lord Buckingham's talents were only once called out, as lord-lieutenant of Ireland, after the Duke of Rutland's death; and he passed his life in dignified repose at Stow; residing little in London, nor appearing often in the house

of peers. On the arrival of Louis the Eighteenth and his expatriated family in this country, when compelled to quit the Russian territories, the noble hospitality with which he received, lodged, and entertained those illustrious fugitives, excited high admiration. They were treated by him and the marchioness with the same honours and testimonies of respect, (even to the formalities of royal etiquette, none of which were omitted,) as if the king had been seated on the throne of his ancestors, and had visited England merely for amusement.

If the dignity bestowed on Lord Temple awakened attention, much greater speculation arose on the supposed motives of the minister, for elevating the Earl of Shelburne to the same rank in the peerage, by the title of Lansdown. An evident coldness, if not alienation, had long subsisted between him and Pitt; nor had Lord Shelburne taken any part in the discussions of the upper house of parliament, during the course of the late session. At the time of his resignation in February 1783, reports injurious to his public character had been industriously spread by his political enemies. Pitt defended him, it is true, in the house of commons, with indignant warmth, from those aspersions; but, it was naturally demanded by men attentive to the course of events, Why, if Mr. Pitt is convinced of the falsity of such imputations, did he not associate his former principal



to the new cabinet, when he himself became first minister in the following month of December? I confess that this fact appeared to me, for a long time, difficult of solution or of explanation, except by supposing that Pitt had discovered reasons for believing the charges to be true, which he had antecedently reprobated, as destitute of foundation. But I am inclined, on more recent information, to consider the accusations as altogether calumnious. The elevation of Lord Shelburne from the rank of an English baron, to which dignity his father had been raised by George the Second in 1760, to that of a marquis, thus overleaping two gradations of the British peerage, might be considered by his former political pupil as an ample remuneration for having originally brought him forward into administration. The title of Shelburne, it should be remembered, was only an *Irish* earldom. I know, indeed, that the marquissate was understood to have been *given*, and to have been *accepted*, as a *receipt in full* for all past demands: but that it did not produce any cordial co-operation or union between the giver and the receiver, became fully manifest by Lord Lansdown's subsequent conduct in parliament.

*December.*—As if Pitt had intended to shew that the augmentation of *rank* conferred on Lord Shelburne, was designed to operate as an extinguisher on all prospective expectations of *employment*; the cabinet office of privy seal, which, ever



since the Duke of Rutland's nomination to the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland, had been put into commission, was now filled up with the name of Earl Gower. That nobleman, who had previously occupied the post of president of the council, made way for Lord Camden; facilitating probably thereby his own elevation, within little more than a year, to the same rank which had just been bestowed on Lord Temple, and on Lord Shelburne. Early in 1786 he was created Marquis of Stafford. His abilities were moderate, but his person and manners had in them great dignity. His vast property, when added to his alliances of consanguinity, or of marriage, with the first ducal families in this country; the Rutlands, Bedfords, Dorsets, and Bridgewaters; rendered him one of the most considerable subjects in the kingdom.

At this time, having survived the tempests by which the capital and the court had been so long agitated, expired Dr. Samuel Johnson: a name which cannot be pronounced without veneration! I consider him as the most illustrious and universal man of letters whom I have personally known in my time; because I contemplate Burke more as an orator than as an author, whatever fame he may have acquired by his writings. Gibbon's reputation, however deservedly high, is limited to a single branch of composition, and to a single work. With Hume and Robertson, I

was not acquainted. Adam Smith, Jacob Bryant, and Horace Walpole—all of whom I knew—eminent as were their talents, could not, on the whole, sustain a competition with Johnson. Those persons, who, like Philip, Earl of Chesterfield, cannot dispense with elegance of manners, and who prefer urbanity before the greatest intellectual powers, must necessarily have estimated Johnson as “a respectable hottentot.” Such he frequently was when in company. Such I have, myself, found him. But, such, likewise, as we know, was Swift, whose cynical and morose temper often set at defiance all the rules of polished society. With Addison, it has always appeared to me that Johnson may be more aptly compared, than with any other writer of eminence who flourished during the course of the eighteenth century. Both were moralists, both poets. Both have left us their travels; Addison, through Italy; Johnson, to the Hebrides. As the former composed only one tragedy, “Cato;” so the latter produced only a single tragic piece, “Irene.” If, as must be allowed, the superiority in that walk of composition rests decidedly with Addison; we shall probably be led to admit, on the other hand, that none of his poetical works, neither “Blenheim,” nor the “Letter to the Earl of Halifax,” elegant and classic as they are, can be placed in competition with the “Imitations of the Third, and of the Tenth, Satires of Juvenal.” “The

Rambler," though not equal to "The Spectator," yet cannot be rated very far below it. And, after discussing their respective merits as men of genius, what shall we say to the labours of Johnson? His Dictionary stands alone, as a monument of human ability, perseverance, and knowledge. We can oppose to it nothing on the part of Addison. It is true that he wrote a comedy, on which experiment Johnson never ventured: but "The Drummer," though it may serve to prove that Addison *could* woo the comic muse, (just as "The Mourning Bride," may be cited to shew that Congreve *could* compose a tragedy;) yet does not serve greatly to augment the measure of his fame. Besides, "Rasselas" more than counterbalances it. On the whole, I believe that in 1818, the name of Addison may stand highest in general estimation: but I am by no means sure of its maintaining that pre-eminence, a century hence. Notwithstanding his constitutional fear of dissolution, Johnson died at last with great serenity and resignation; preserving undiminished his faculties, at more than seventy-five; a prerogative denied by Providence to Swift. He was followed to the grave by Burke, who had not omitted to visit him during his illness; by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and by many other men of literary eminence. He has no monument erected to him in Westminster Abbey; nor did he indeed need any sepulchral honours, inscriptions, or panegy-



rics : Boswell has transmitted him to the latest posterity. The flat stone that covers his remains in Poet's Corner, on which I have lately stood, awakens involuntary sentiments of admiration and respect.

1785.

*January.*—WE are now arrived at a period of time, which presents a striking contrast to the portion of George the Third's reign that we have hitherto reviewed. From the meeting of parliament, towards the close of 1780, down to its dissolution in March 1784, the whole interval exhibits a scene of fermentation, approaching to convulsion. Twice the government had been wholly suspended. First, during six weeks subsequent to Lord Shelburne's resignation in February 1783 ; and again, for a considerably longer space, while Pitt and the *coalition* contended for power. Five administrations had rapidly succeeded each other. Even when Pitt, having finally surmounted all opposition, might be said almost to dictate his pleasure to the new parliament ; yet the troubled waves did not instantly subside. The great struggle carried on in Westminster, which was ultimately decided in Fox's favour, by "the interposition of female charms," far more than by his own exertions, or the efforts of his friends ; had no sooner terminated, than his persecution commenced within the walls of the

house of commons. Overborne by numbers, he could only appeal to the justice of another session, and to the operation of time on the minds of his opponents. The new "East India Bill," which followed, gave rise to the most acrimonious discussions. But, with the prorogation, a calm took place; and from the autumn of 1784, down to that of 1788, the sterility of political events may be said to equal their multiplicity and importance during the four preceding years. The court of George the Third—if a prince who led a patriarchal life in the bosom of his family could be said properly to have had any court—never furnished other than scanty materials; and parliament, subdued by the ability, or captivated by the eloquence of Pitt, no longer presented an arena on which the two candidates for power triumphed in their turn. Fox, supported only by a few steady adherents, still maintained indeed an unequal conflict; but, till the king's alarming seizure, and temporary privation of intellect in October 1788, took place, administration scarcely acknowledged any limits to their influence over the legislative body.

*25th January.*—A species of compulsory unanimity characterized the opening of the session. The minister, probably mindful of the severe animadversions which had been thrown upon the prolixity, as well as on the ambiguity of the speech pronounced by his majesty, two years

earlier, when the Earl of Shelburne presided in the councils of the crown, and when he was himself chancellor of the exchequer ; seemed on the present occasion to have studied brevity, if not perspicuity. Lord Surrey nevertheless rising, not only demanded an explanation of various obscure passages contained in it ; but arraigned its general composition, as presenting matter of strong disapprobation, or rather of alarm ; while Burke accused the administration of renewing in their persons the “ *Tyrii bilingues* ” of Virgil. No division was, however, attempted. Every thing bent before the new minister ; and such unquestionably would have been the spirit manifested by the house, if Pitt had limited his demands to measures of general or of national policy. The junction of Lord North and Fox, followed at a short interval by their “ East India Bill,” had excited such universal condemnation, that it became necessary for Pitt to commit some act by which he should diminish his high reputation, before his opponents could at all contend with him in parliament. During the whole period of time since the elevation of the Hanover family to the throne, no house of commons, in the lapse of seventy years, had been chosen on principles so pure as the body of men who met in 1784. Scarcely any money was disbursed by the treasury, at least on this side of the Tweed, for the purpose of securing elections. Enthusiasm and loyalty, or, as Fox



pretended, imposture and delusion, rendered almost unnecessary such unconstitutional means of procuring support. It forms matter of regret, that Pitt should have lent himself to acts which could be interpreted as vindictive, or allied to the spirit of persecution. But, no sooner did he adopt those measures, than he instantly found the limit of his own ascendancy over the very individuals who on almost all other points followed him with a sort of implicit submission.

The scrutiny, granted by the high bailiff of Westminster, while he at the same time refused to make any return of members, as the precept enjoined him to do, formed in itself a violation of the constitution. It was besides most oppressive towards Fox, who ought to have been seated, leaving Sir Cecil Wray to seek redress by petition. Even Lord Hood seemed to forget his own dignity, while thus acquiescing in his exclusion from the house of commons, with a view to favour the ministerial purposes. Westminster remained wholly unrepresented. Meanwhile the scrutiny proceeded, though, of necessity, with a slow pace; the expence attending it, which was enormous, being supported by the Dukes of Devonshire, Portland, and the other great leaders of the Whig party; as Fox possessed no funds whatsoever, and scarcely could raise money sufficient for his personal subsistence. His creditors had even become so numerous or importunate

about this time, that his effects and books being seized at his lodgings, contiguous to Brookes's, in St. James's-street, and sold; he was reduced, during a few days or weeks, to take refuge at the house of a friend, Mr. Moore, in Sackville-street, Piccadilly. Dudley Long, who has since assumed the name of North, and who represented the borough of Grimsby in successive parliaments, enjoyed a distinguished place in Fox's friendship. He was, indeed, one of Fox's most steady adherents, and had been destined for the office of a supreme counsellor in Bengal, if the memorable "East India Bill" of 1783 had been carried into effect. Few men of his time possessed greater convivial powers, enlivened by wit. Fox, whose pecuniary embarrassments were universally recognized, being attacked by a severe indisposition, which confined him to his apartment, Dudley Long frequently visited him. In the course of conversation, Fox alluding to his complaints, remarked that he was compelled to observe much regularity in his diet and hours; adding, "I live by rule, like clock-work." "Yes," replied Dudley, "I suppose you mean that you go *tick, tick, tick.*"

1st—9th February.—Welbore Ellis, the patriarch of the opposition, commenced the proceedings relative to the Westminster scrutiny, by moving for the attendance of the high bailiff at the bar. His examination, followed by that of his two assessors, Mr. Hargrave, and Arthur Mur-

phy,—(the latter of whom has attained to higher eminence in our time, as a man of letters, than to legal distinction in Westminster Hall,)—was accompanied by circumstances of great party violence. Corbett, the high bailiff, assailed by questions calculated to force from him disclosures favourable to Fox, manifested not only reluctance in answering, but ingenuity in evading enquiries. At the head of the ministerial advocates and defenders, stood forward Lord Mulgrave, who might be considered as in the high road to a British peerage. To that dignity he had indeed some pretensions, being descended in the maternal line from the celebrated Lord Hervey, the *Sporus* of Pope; as well as from the Annesleys, Earls of Anglesea. After having strenuously supported, during successive sessions, the Earl of Sandwich, then first lord of the admiralty; he had followed Dundas's example, by joining the new administration. While Murphy remained under examination, Fox perceiving his dislike to give evidence on certain points connected with the scrutiny, observed that "the gentleman seemed unwilling to make a plain answer to a plain question." Lord Mulgrave instantly rising, severely animadverted on Fox's expression, as not only unbecoming, but insulting to Murphy. Far, however, from conceding or apologizing, Fox repeated it; adding, "The noble lord may assume, if he pleases, the office of my censor. There is



no man in this assembly whose censure I hold in less consideration. But he never shall compel me to retract a single syllable of my assertion."

*9th February.*—Ellis having moved for an immediate return of the *precept*, the debate which ensued brought forward to public notice, for the first time, one of the most accomplished orators and individuals whom we have beheld in our day. I mean, Mr. William Windham. He had been chosen member for the city of Norwich, at the late general election, notwithstanding his well-known predilection for Fox, and his slender patrimonial property, which then scarcely exceeded twelve hundred pounds a year. His person was graceful, elegant, and distinguished ; slender, but not meagre. The lineaments of his countenance, though they displayed the ravages of the small-pox, were pleasing, and retained a character of animation, blended with spirit and intelligence. Over his whole figure, nature had thrown an air of mind. His manners corresponded with his external appearance ; and his conversation displayed the treasures of a highly cultivated understanding. Ardent in his love of civil liberty, for the preservation of which blessing, I believe, he would as cheerfully have shed his blood as did Hampden or Sidney ; it was constitutional freedom that he venerated, not a republican and impracticable emancipation from limited monarchical government. Strongly attached to Fox by pri-

vate friendship, as well as by political ties, he nevertheless quitted his leader, when Fox persisted to justify and to panegyryze the sanguinary republic of France, in defiance of its enormities and excesses.

To Burke, Windham unquestionably bore some analogy; and on *his* shoulders may be said to have descended the mantle of Burke, when he finally quitted the house of commons. If Windham fell below him in general or in classic knowledge, he might be esteemed Burke's equal in the splendour and variety of his imagery, his command of language, and his wild but finely sustained flights into the regions of fancy. In suavity of disposition, and control over himself, Windham was his superior:—for, either from irritability of temper, intensity of feeling, strength of prejudices, or violence of party spirit, Burke frequently became unmanageable, and exhibited a spectacle distressing to his friends. There was in Windham's eloquence, an eccentricity and originality of phrase peculiarly his own; picturesque, but full of energy: as, for instance, when in 1809, after the battle of Talavera, Sir Arthur Wellesley having been raised by ministers at once to the dignity of a viscount, Windham observed upon it, that “he disapproved of Sir Arthur's being thus elevated over a whole gradation of the peerage, because if he made two more such leaps, the *Red Book* would not hold him.” Windham's talents,

brilliant and various as they were, always however appeared to me more adapted to speculative, than to practical life; rather fitted for the university, than for the cabinet; better calculated to excite admiration in the house of commons, than formed, by wise counsels and measures, to sustain, or to extricate, an embarrassed empire. The ill-fated expedition under Sombreuil, sent to perish at Quiberon, in 1795; and the unfortunate selection of General Whitelocke for the command of the troops against Buenos-Ayres, some years later; are both to be imputed, eminently, if not exclusively, to Windham. I am of opinion, that if Burke had ever been admitted into the cabinet, he would have displayed a similar want of judgment. Neither the one nor the other were statesmen, though they abounded in genius, learning, fancy, and prodigious powers of declamation.

Pitt replied on that evening, not to Fox, but to Sheridan; whose charges or recriminations, pointed with equal wit and severity, forced the chancellor of the exchequer to rise in his own defence. Windham gave great promise of future eminence. Fox, after exhausting every argument drawn from the statute law of England, from the immemorial practice of parliament, and from general reason, applicable to the case, apostrophized his adversary in the most animated terms. "I too well perceive," observed he, "that the minister's object in sustaining the scrutiny, is only to



persecute an individual whom he honours by making him the victim of private resentment. I have always emulated to stand fair with him. It has been my pride to fight side by side with him the battles of the constitution: little suspecting that he would so soon desert his principles, and become the agent of that very secret influence which he had so long, and so successfully, laboured to overturn. I was always prepared to find in him a formidable rival, who in the race of glory would leave me far behind: but I believed him incapable of descendnig to be my persecutor."

"I protest," continued Fox, "when I heard that the brightest ornaments of England had fallen sacrifices to popular delusion; that Lord John Cavendish had lost his seat at York; that Mr. Coke and General Conway had been treated in a similar manner by their constituents; I regretted having been deprived of the distinction of suffering in such society. But, it is obviously intended to weary out my friends by expence. A sum of thirty thousand pounds a year will be swallowed up on the two sides. *My own last shilling may soon be got at—for I am poor. Yet in such a cause I will lay down my last shilling.* If ultimately I lose my election, it will be for want of money, not from want of a legal majority of votes; while Westminster will be deprived of its franchise, because I am unable to prosecute a pecuniary contest with the treasury." These

concluding words contained so strong a charge against administration, that they could not remain without reply. Pitt having already spoken at great length, Dundas therefore presented himself to the house. After treating as a matter of derision, Fox's assertion, that he had been selected by ministers for an object of oppression, Dundas accused him with converting the electors of Westminster into instruments of systematic faction and sedition. Irritated at such an imputation, Fox declared it to be a direct falsehood: but his adversary, neither disconcerted nor betrayed into warmth, contented himself with firmly repeating his opinion.

About five o'clock in the morning, a division took place on Lord Mulgrave's amendment to Ellis's motion; by which the high bailiff, though he was not precluded from making a *return*, yet received indirect encouragement to proceed in the scrutiny, accelerating as much as possible its progress. It now became evident how unpopular a measure the minister had adopted:—for, instead of the overwhelming majorities which throughout the preceding session sustained him upon every question, he could only carry the amendment by thirty-nine, though above three hundred members voted. Fox, no less than his friends, regarding such a division as a triumph, already prepared to renew the subject under another parliamentary form.

10th — 18th *February*. — Colonel Fitzpatrick having presented a second petition from the electors of Westminster, requesting to be heard by counsel at the bar, as they had new facts to state ; it was opposed by Lord Frederic Campbell. He was a son of the beautiful Miss Bellenden, maid of honour to the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline ; and whose virtue resisted the seduction of George the Second, previous to his ascending the throne. Lord Frederic had already passed his fiftieth year ; but he still retained all the graces that he had inherited from his mother. His figure united symmetry with elegance ; and his manners, noble, yet soft ; dignified, yet devoid of any pride or affectation ; conciliated all who approached him. Devoid of shining talents, he nevertheless wanted not either ability or eloquence in a certain degree, both which were under the control of reason and of temper. He had sate in many parliaments, and was attached to the crown, if not to the government, by a lucrative place, the lord registrar of Scotland.

When about forty years of age, he married the Dowager Countess Ferrers, widow of the unfortunate Laurence Shirley, Earl Ferrers, who expiated by a public execution, in 1760, the crime of having premeditatedly shot his steward. She had, however, been separated from him by act of parliament, some years earlier, on account of his ill treatment. Sir William Meredith, who made



no inconsiderable figure in parliament, in office, and in public life, during the first years of the present reign, was her brother. Miss Meredith, who, when young, possessed great personal attractions, walking with her sisters in the Mall, in St. James's Park, was accosted by a woman who demanded charity, offering at the same time to tell her fortune. On being repulsed for her importunity by Miss Mary Meredith (of whom I am now speaking), the woman, irritated, said to her, "You think yourself very pretty; but you are born to marry a man who will be hanged." Probably, this story, like other similar predictions, was made subsequent to the fact which it pretended to foretell. That a very singular and sinister destiny attended her through life, must, however, be admitted, when I add that she was burned to death in her bed, at Lord Frederic's seat of Coomb Bank, in Kent, together with the house itself. This melancholy event took place not more than eleven years ago, when she must have been about seventy. Her husband survived her near nine years, dying in 1816, at above fourscore; still elegant and distinguished even in decay.

*21st February.*—The question before the house being "that counsel should be heard at the bar, for the purpose of stating new facts," Lord Frederic moved an amendment to Fitzpatrick's motion, calculated to restrain "the introduction of any extraneous or offensive matter." A long

debate ensued, government carrying the point by a majority of fifty-one; 203 sustaining administration, while only 145 supported Fox. The triumph was nevertheless dearly purchased, because it took place in contradiction to public opinion. During the course of the evening, a proposition was made on the part of Sir Cecil Wray, tending, as he asserted, to accelerate the termination of the scrutiny; but Fox rejected it with contempt. "I believe," said he, "Sir Cecil to be himself an honest gentleman, though the proposal now conveyed in his name is the result of unexampled impudence and effrontery." Erskine and Pigott being called in after the division, as counsel, the former, in their joint names, informed the Speaker, that "as they could not submit to the restraint imposed on them by the recent decision of the house, they requested permission to withdraw from the bar." The high bailiff having, however, been again examined, the discussion was renewed; Fitzpatrick moving that "he should be directed to make an immediate return of the members chosen for Westminster." Here Pitt may be said to have first found the limits of his parliamentary supremacy; for he could only negative the motion by *nine*, though above 280 members voted on the occasion. Such a majority was, in fact, defeat.

Among the individuals who generally supported him, but who spoke as well as voted against

him on that night, was Mr. Bankes, one of the representatives for Corff Castle: a borough of which he was known to possess the complete command, and to return both the members. He has indeed continued so to do for near forty years; and at the hour when I am now writing, in April 1818, he, together with his son, sit in parliament for the same place. Brought up with Pitt at Cambridge, nearly of the same age, and allied by the closest friendship, Bankes had received from the chancellor of the exchequer the most public, as well as flattering proofs of predilection and confidence. To *him*, in December 1783, Pitt delegated his ministerial functions within the walls of the house of commons, during the short, but very critical period, that elapsed between his acceptance of office and his re-election for Appleby. Nor did Bankes prove himself incapable of so important a trust. His talents compensated by their calm solidity, for the want of brilliancy. His enunciation, slow, formal, precise, and not without some degree of embarrassment, was nevertheless always controlled by judgment, caution, and good sense. No man displayed more rectitude of intention, independence of mind, and superiority to every private object of interest, or of ambition. These qualities formed indeed the impediments to his elevation: for, whoever considers his ample patrimonial fortune, his intimacy with the minister, and his parliamentary interest,



cannot doubt that he must have attained to the peerage at an early period of his life, if he had not himself obstructed his own entrance into that assembly.

We have beheld a banker transformed into a British peer, and placed by Pitt, in 1797, on the bench of barons. But he exhibited a very different degree of personal and political devotion from Bankes, whose attachment to his friend was always restrained and regulated by high public principle. I remember that, on the division of the 9th of February, and again on the 21st, after the agitation of the *scrutiny*, Robert Smith was one of the *tellers* on the ministerial side; while Bankes voted with Fox. Lord Mulgrave was, on one, if not on both occasions, the other *teller*. Smith and Phipps reached the upper house. Bankes still remains a commoner. Pitt did not possess enlargement or nobility of mind enough to forgive him for exercising his parliamentary independence, when it came into collision with his own favourite measures. *Tout ou rien*, was his maxim; and like the goddess immortalized by Pope, he seemed on a day of debate to say to his followers,

“Here strip my children, here at once leap in,  
And try who best can dash through thick and thin!”

In making these observations I am only impelled by truth: for, I believe, in the course of my whole

life I never conversed during five minutes with Bankes, whose manners were altogether cold, repulsive, and destitute of amenity. He was not, indeed, the only member of the house whom a strong sense of justice and rectitude induced, though in contradiction to his ordinary line of conduct, to oppose by his voice, as well as by his vote, the continuance of the *scrutiny*. Martin, member for Tewksbury, whose incorruptible integrity compensated for the mediocrity of his talents, followed Bankes's example. Such instances of defection eloquently spoke the general sense of the country on the treatment experienced by Fox.

16th — 24th *February*.—The expenditure of the public money in Bengal was brought forward as matter of crimination against ministers, by Francis, at this time. Pitt and Dundas defended the measures of the board of control; leaving to Major Scott the task of repelling the charges preferred against Hastings, for profusion, oppression, and mal-administration of the revenues. In the progress of these investigations, Burke, availing himself of the ascendancy which his talents and eloquence conferred on him, endeavoured to silence his adversary, by questioning him relative to the nature of his connexion with the governor-general. Scott, while he by no means denied that he acted as Hastings's agent,—a quality of which, he said, he was proud,—retorted on Burke, whom



he accused of being himself virtually a minister of the Rajah of Tanjore. "I know as a fact," added Scott, "that he waited in person on the late chairman of the court of directors, on behalf of the rajah; and his near relative (William Burke) avowedly resides at this time as agent in the court of Tanjore." Thus attacked, Burke threw over himself, as he always did on similar occasions, the shield of denial; accompanied with solemn declarations of his own purity, disinterestedness, and superiority to every pecuniary consideration. After protesting upon his honour that he was not the rajah's agent, Burke subjoined, "True it is, I have acted with similar feelings towards many individuals; but I never received any pecuniary compensation for my exertions. During a considerable number of years I was agent to the province of New York, and in that capacity I have negotiated with his majesty's ministers. I have stood up as the advocate and agent of the Nabob of Oude, of the Rajah of Benares, and of many other oppressed or plundered princes of Indostan. But, my sole remuneration lies in relieving the distressed, and raising the unfortunate." Notwithstanding this affecting appeal to the passions, yet, as William Burke resided in the capacity of agent at the Rajah of Tanjore's *darbar*, transmitting to Edmund Burke intelligence, on which the latter spoke and acted; it seems difficult not to consider



him as having been connected by close ties with the Gentoo prince in question.

28th February. — The subjects agitated relative to Bengal, and to Tanjore, formed nevertheless only preludes to the more important enquiry into the private debts of Mahommed Ali, Nabob of Arcot. Fox and Francis opened the subject to the house, with great ability ; but the “Atlantean shoulders” of Burke principally sustained the ponderous mass, under the weight of which, any other mind, memory, and energies than his, must have been oppressed or overwhelmed. His speech, though of intolerable length, yet displayed a body of information respecting the finances of the presidency of Madras, as connected with the Nabob of Arcot, which, I believe, no other individual in either house of parliament ever possessed. Mahommed Ali, one of the most able Asiatic princes who has reigned in our time, whose judgment, patience, and address, supported him on the *musnud* during nearly half a century ; maintained a perpetual conflict either with the insatiable avarice and rapacity, or against the more oppressive policy and tyranny, of successive governors of Fort St. George. Having, in consequence of their exorbitant demands on his revenue, contracted a large debt before the year 1776 ; and being treated with severity bordering on insult, by Lord Pigot, then governor of Madras ; he determined on appealing from these

delegated authorities, to the fountain of political power. With that view, in hopes of obtaining redress, either from the king, or from the administration, as early as the year 1777 he sent to England, in quality of his *vacqueel* or minister, Mr. Macpherson, who has since exercised with so much integrity and ability the functions of governor-general of India after Hastings's departure, for which services he was raised to the rank of a baronet. On his return to Calcutta, in the capacity of a supreme counsellor, in 1781, the commission entrusted by the nabob to him was transferred to his friend, Mr. James Macpherson, the compiler of Ossian's Poems. In the month of August 1783, Mahommed Ali, not only without any solicitation on my part, but without my knowledge or consent, named me his minister jointly with James Macpherson. The recent service which I had rendered to the Carnatic, and to the nation at large, by transmitting overland the first intelligence of the restoration of peace between England and France; which act had not been performed by ministers, nor by the directors of the East India Company; produced my appointment. That information arriving at Madras in June 1783, at a most critical period of time, the nabob, in consequence of the representations made to him on the subject, conferred upon me the nomination.

In the autumn of 1784, when the newly con-



stituted East India Board took into their consideration the affairs of the Presidency of Fort St. George, three distinct loans or debts existed in that settlement, all of which had been successively contracted by Mahommed Ali. The two first, denominated the *Debt of 1767*, and the *Cavalry loan*, did not exceed, in the aggregate, the sum of six hundred thousand pounds: but the third, commonly called the *Debt of 1777*, amounted to two millions four hundred thousand pounds sterling. By its enemies, the terms "exorbitant, usurious, and fraudulent," were applied to this loan on every occasion. Nevertheless, as several years had already elapsed since it had been incurred; as the shares or bonds forming its security, had passed by sale into a variety of hands; and as the nabob, who contracted it, not only admitted its validity, but had granted *tuncaws* or assignments of various portions of his territorial revenues to particular creditors for their payment;—the India commissioners having maturely weighed these facts, sent out orders to acknowledge the three debts as valid engagements. They next proceeded to set apart certain portions of his highness's revenues, by regular instalments, for their gradual liquidation within a fixed number of years. In the execution of these measures, Pitt and Dundas were not only actuated, as I believe, by the purest motives; but, I consider them to have adopted a wise, healing, enlarged, and laudable policy. The



settlement would probably have been thrown into convulsions similar with those that took place under Lord Pigot in 1776, if orders had been transmitted from England, declaring the nabob's debts illegal and void. Fox, nevertheless, either preferring abstract principles of justice before any measures of state convenience; or rather, carried away by the declamations and violence of Burke, whose motives, elevated and upright as they might apparently be, were usually tinged in almost every act, with human infirmity or enmity;—Fox unquestionably viewed these claims through a different medium. His "East India Bill" had, by one of its clauses or provisions, declared them unlawful, null, and irrecoverable through any legal process, from the nabob. It was therefore natural for Fox, when they became subjects of parliamentary investigation, to protest against their validity; and to reprobate the orders which had been transmitted to India, providing for their eventual liquidation.

His speech on the occasion,—for it was Fox who began the discussion,—though criminating the new East India Board, and arraigning their late determination in severe terms, yet abstained from any personal imputation on their motives. But Francis, who seconded Fox's motion for the production of papers elucidatory of the enquiry, by no means restrained himself within similar limits. Addressing the first minister and the

treasurer of the navy individually, he admonished them that "their characters were deeply committed, as rumour loudly asserted that a *collusion* existed between the board of control and the creditors of the nabob." Dundas immediately rose, and in the progress of a very masterly, but concise speech, explained with admirable perspicuity the nature of the three classes of debt under examination; justifying at the same time the measures embraced for their gradual extinction. After thus vindicating the general policy and utility of the orders sent out to Madras; with that good humour which always characterized him, accompanied by manliness of mind, he adverted to Francis's accusation. "It is not the first time," observed Dundas, "that my conduct has been misrepresented. With similar truth, it has been asserted that I received from an honourable baronet a very large sum of money on a particular occasion. The fact is just as true as the pretended *collusion* of this day. But, as I slept perfectly serene under the former imputation, so, I trust, my temper will remain equally unruffled at the present moment." Sir Thomas Rumbold, to whom he alluded, was not only in the house at the time, but took a part in the debate, and even spoke in favour of Fox's motion. It was therefore impossible that Dundas could seize an occasion more favourable for refuting the calumnious reports

circulated respecting him, than the opportunity of which he availed himself.

When he sat down, the discussion being apparently terminated, the house appeared ready to divide ; but Burke, rising with evident marks of strong emotion, delivered an oration which lasted near five hours ; and which neither Demosthenes nor Tully could have exceeded in energy, eloquence, or animation. I speak with perfect impartiality, as I by no means coincided in opinion with Burke, whose prejudices and animosities almost always blinded his judgment, or obscured his superior intelligence. But, even when he most failed in producing conviction, he excited not less admiration of his resplendent talents. It would be a vain attempt to convey any adequate idea of the mass of knowledge which he displayed or submitted on that evening to his audience. Every species of information relative to the subject, that unwearied labour, combined with ability, could collect, he furnished with a lavish hand. Against the *Debt of 1777*, as originating in bribery and usury, he principally exhausted his invectives. Against Paul Benfield, who had been a member of the late house of commons, and who was supposed to own a very considerable proportion of that loan, Burke levelled such abuse, as no person in my time (not excepting Hastings, or Rumbold, or Sykes, or Middleton, or Rodney, or Lord Shelburne,) ever attracted



within the walls of either house of parliament. From base and venal subservience to Benfield, and his agent or representative in that assembly, Mr. Richard Atkinson; Burke charged both Pitt and Dundas with systematically sacrificing their own honour, the interests of the state, and the revenues of the Carnatic. "This," exclaimed he, in his beautiful and allegorical language, which borrowed its allusions by turns from every source, sacred or classic, as they suited his purpose;—"this was the golden cup of abominations! This was the enchanted chalice of the fornications of usury and rapine, which was tendered to ministers by the gorgeous Eastern harlot! A chalice which so many of the nobles, no less than the people of this devoted land, have drained to the very dregs! But do ministers suppose that no reckoning is to follow this lewd debauch? that no punishment will be demanded for such national prostitution? You have the act palpably represented before your eyes. Atkinson, who kept in this capital a public office, where the whole business of the late general election was managed, is Benfield's agent. The principal of the grand election-monger must of course be indemnified for his exertions. The claims of Benfield and his crew must be exempted from all enquiry."

After thus exhausting his rage on Benfield and Atkinson, he descended to arithmetical details, proving the share which the former of those in-

dividuals was asserted to possess in the *Debt of 1777*. "My best information," continued Burke, "places it at four hundred thousand pounds. This sum, encreased by the scheme of the present ministers nearly one-third in magnitude, and bearing interest at six per cent. gives to Benfield an annuity of thirty-five thousand pounds a year, charged on the revenues of the Carnatic." Having next attempted by other calculations, founded on the usurious advantages which Benfield might derive, to swell his income to the enormous sum of nearly 150,000*l.* per annum; Burke exclaimed, "Behold here a specimen of the new and immaculate aristocracy created by our mirror of financial ministers! This is to constitute the support of the crown and constitution against the antient, natural interests of Great Britain, the grand counterpoise against odious *coalitions*! A single Benfield outweighs them all! A criminal, who ought long since to have fattened with his offal the region kites, is by the board of East India control virtually invested with the administration of a great kingdom, and put in possession of an estate effacing the splendour of all the nobility throughout Europe!"—"If this chain of circumstances does not lead the house necessarily to infer, that the minister has paid to Benfield's avarice the services rendered to his ambition by Benfield's connexions; I know not any thing short of the confession of one of the two



parties which can persuade you of his guilt. But, I believe, after such an exposure of facts, no man can entertain a doubt of the corrupt collusion of ministers with the interest of the delinquents in India."

Burke, no doubt, supposed that charges and imputations of such deep atrocity must instantly call up Pitt or Dundas. But, so absurd, as well as unfounded, did the accusations appear, and with such ridicule or incredulity did the house consider the asserted complicity of the chancellor of the exchequer and the East India board with Benfield, merely in order to secure for the latter an ill-acquired fortune, that the treasury bench remained silent. Burke's violence recoiling on himself, a loud cry of Question arose from every part of the assembly. Not a word was uttered in reply, Pitt disdaining to refute allegations which his character sufficiently repelled. Even the numbers on the division attested how little conviction followed Burke's declamation, whatever wonder or respect might be excited by his eloquence. The opposition could only command sixty-nine votes, while administration was followed by one hundred and sixty-four. It was not thus that Pitt divided on the question of the Westminster scrutiny! *There* he found his power and his ability unable to prolong the contest, or even to secure a majority. But Burke, in 1785, however sublime were his



endowments, had, by his intemperate abuse of them, sunk greatly in general estimation.

Paul Benfield, who, at more than one period of the reign of George the Third, acted a most conspicuous part on the great theatre of public life, and of parliament, was born at Cheltenham, in or about the year 1740, where his father exercised the trade of a land-surveyor. He had received little aid from education; but, having been sent out to Fort St. George, at an early time of life, in the capacity of an assistant engineer, he soon distinguished himself there, by executing some public works, which, while they acquired him professional reputation, laid the foundation of his prodigious fortune. He was subsequently transferred from the military, to the civil service of the East India Company; and he then commenced his pecuniary transactions with the Nabob of Arcot. His extensive connexions among the native bankers, or *soucars*, enabling him to command their assistance, he made great advances of money to Mahommed Ali, for which he unquestionably received very high interest. The expedition undertaken by the Madras government, for the reduction of Tanjore in 1773, requiring on the part of the nabob ample pecuniary resources, Benfield principally supplied the necessary funds. But, as his highness's bonds were already fallen into discredit, and had sunk to nearly half their value, that prince found himself

necessitated to make over to Benfield, by way of security, the crops or productions of certain districts in the Carnatic, or in the kingdom of Tanjore.

Thus far Mr. Benfield seemed to advance under favourable auspices: but, with the arrival of Lord Pigot in 1776, as governor of Madras, his prospects became overclouded. That nobleman, who condemned the expedition against Tanjore, and who suspected Benfield of secretly abetting the party which opposed his measures; not only seized on the territorial assignments made over to him by the nabob, but suspended him from the company's service. After Lord Pigot's imprisonment and decease, which speedily followed, Benfield still remaining deprived of his rank, determined to revisit Europe. This resolution he executed, arriving in London about the beginning of autumn 1779. Lord North was then deeply plunged into the gulf of the American war, while France and Spain occupied the British Channel with their combined fleets. The king and the first lord of the treasury had become equally unpopular. Parliament drew towards its sixth session, and the opposition anticipated the fall of administration with a sort of certainty. Under these circumstances of ministerial and national depression, Benfield, who had brought with him a very considerable sum of money, which he destined for purposes of per-

sonal ambition, easily found means to offer his services to the government. His first object being to obtain, or to create, a parliamentary interest; he made such purchases at Cricklade, in Wiltshire, as gave him a considerable influence in that borough, for which he was returned one of the two members, when the new house of commons met in October 1780. With a view to render him odious, as well as to throw discredit on a ministry reduced to accept such assistance, the opposition loudly asserted that he brought *seven* individuals into the house. Burke encreased the number to *eight*. In the course of his eloquent but most intemperate speech of the 28th of February, he exclaimed, "Paul Benfield did not disdain,—such was his affection for the rotten constitution of England,—to become a wholesale upholsterer for this assembly! He made no fewer than *eight* members, (reckoning himself,) in the *last* parliament. What copious streams of pure blood must he not have infused into the veins of the *present*!" This assertion was, nevertheless, altogether exaggerated, as I know that he only brought in two friends in 1780, besides himself. After the dissolution of 1784, he neither obtained a seat, Cricklade having been disfranchised during the short existence of the Rockingham administration; nor possessed the means of introducing any person into that assembly. Atkinson, though he might be considered as Benfield's



agent, did not owe to Benfield his election, nor acted by his impulse in a parliamentary capacity.

Early in 1781, Mr. Benfield, who had antecedently been restored to his rank in the company's civil service, by the exertions of government in Leadenhall-street, returned overland to Madras. Lord Macartney being nominated to the government of that settlement, embarked at the same time for the coast of Coromandel; and as Benfield had been able to render him some pecuniary services, which greatly facilitated his departure, it was natural to suppose that they might have continued on terms of friendship. But Benfield's temper, disposition, and character, exacting, dissatisfied, and ambitious, could not easily be made to harmonize with Lord Macartney; who, though a man of unimpeached integrity, of elevated views, and always attentive to the great public interests committed to his care, yet wanted amenity of manners, ductility, and powers of conciliation. A rupture took place between them; and Lord Macartney probably dreading the fate which had befallen his predecessor Lord Pigot, who was arrested and confined by some of the members of his own council, determined, as a measure of precaution, to remove Benfield from the seat of government. For that purpose, an order was sent him to repair to Permacoil, a fortified rock not far removed from Madras; a detachment of the company's troops

being there stationed, of which garrison Benfield was constituted paymaster. He soon afterwards, however, obtained permission to retire to Pondicherry; and on Lord Macartney's resignation of his office in 1785, Benfield, against whom no charge whatever had been preferred, was, by orders sent out from England, allowed to return to Fort St. George. There he remained during two or three years, occupied in realizing his large fortune; which, by the regulations adopted respecting the Nabob of Arcot's debts, was placed in a secure train of eventual liquidation. Finding, nevertheless, that the prejudices entertained respecting him precluded his elevation to any of those situations of high trust or dignity in the company's service to which he aspired, he resolved finally to leave India. On his second return to England in 1790, he either brought home with him, or left behind at Madras, secured in the *Debt of 1777*, a sum not falling short of Burke's calculation; I mean, four hundred thousand pounds.

It might have been expected that Burke, who had attacked him with so much virulence, only five years earlier, would have renewed the charges against him on his re-appearance in this country; especially when Benfield again took his seat in parliament, by the assistance of the treasury, as member for Malmsbury. But Burke was not only then engaged in the prosecution of Has-



things: the French Revolution, which had taken place, occupied his whole mind; while it offered a more noble, as well as ample subject, for the exercise of his faculties. He likewise probably anticipated the separation which finally happened between himself and Fox, as almost inevitably resulting from the different estimates formed by them respecting that event. Benfield therefore, in order to repair his loss of Cricklade, purchased another borough, Shaftsbury; and had he possessed the moderation, as well as the patience, necessary for consolidating a great fortune, he might probably (like so many other individuals returned from the East, whom it would be invidious to particularize,) have gradually attained to honours, if not to employments. But the restlessness of his character, and the insatiable desire of augmenting his vast wealth, impelled him, instead of waiting the slow operation of time and events, to embark anew on the sea of mercantile adventure. Having formed a commercial connexion with a gentleman named Boyd, who, previous to the French revolution, was established at Paris, but who had been driven from that capital by the convulsions that followed it, Benfield and his new partner opened in London a species of banking-house. During the period between 1793 and 1796, when Pitt was necessitated to borrow annually large sums, in order to maintain the war against France; Benfield and



Boyd became the principal contractors for those loans, by which they were known to have realized great profits. The money-market lay indeed in some degree under their control, and they were considered as its dictators.

Meanwhile Benfield, after purchasing Sir Thomas Rumbold's fine seat of Wood Hall in the county of Hertford, and the splendid mansion belonging to the Earl of Thanet in Grosvenor-square; bought likewise an estate producing nominally nearly thirty thousand pounds a year, situate in Demerara or Essequibo, on the continent of South America. But, at the moment when he seemed to be placed on such a stupendous elevation, or as Burke denominated him, to have become "the minion of the human race," he touched upon his fall. Benfield and Boyd having made large purchases in the public funds, at the time of Lord Malmsbury's mission to Lisle, in the sanguine anticipation of his success, and that negotiation for peace totally failing, the depression of the stocks occasioned by it shook their credit to its foundations. In this emergency, sixteen capitalists of the city of London came forward voluntarily with a loan of five thousand pounds each, in order to support the house. But the sum of eighty thousand pounds was found wholly inadequate to their wants. Bankruptcy ensued, followed by an extent issued on the part of the crown against their effects. Benfield im-

mediately withdrew to France, in the public funds or securities of which country he had invested considerable sums, previous to the war. At Paris he resided during several years, dragging on a miserable existence, unable with safety to revisit England, destitute of pecuniary resources, and literally wanting all the comforts of life. In that state of dereliction he there expired; his funeral expences being defrayed by a subscription of the English resident in the French metropolis. Such was the singular destiny experienced by a man, who, whatever obloquy or censure might attach to the mode in which he acquired his fortune, could only have lost it by consummate imprudence and avidity. His history and his end remind us of Law, in the annals of France under the regency of the Duke of Orleans, during the last century. Like Benfield, Law closed his life in obscurity, if not in poverty, at Venice, after having performed so distinguished a part on the theatre of Europe. I return to the course of public affairs.

*3rd March.*—The division which took place in the house of commons on the 21st of February, when ministers were only able to carry the continuation of the *scrutiny*, by so small a majority as *nine*, naturally induced Fox without delay to agitate anew that question. Sawbridge having moved that “an immediate return should be made to the precept;” Pitt not venturing again directly to negative it, proposed that “the house do im-

mediately adjourn." But even this indirect mode of defeating the proposition, he was unable to induce the house to adopt. Fox having carried the question upon immediate adjournment, against the administration, by a majority of *thirty-eight*, Pitt did not think proper to repeat his own disgrace, or to hazard a second division. I say, disgrace; because, however I may have voted in 1785, I now consider the whole business of the *Westminster scrutiny*, as one of the strongest acts of ministerial oppression and persecution which I have witnessed in my time. It demanded indeed all Pitt's popularity, supported by the influence of government, and aided by the recent recollections of Fox's "India Bill," to surmount the disadvantageous impressions excited in the public mind by the *scrutiny*. Fox, elated at his triumph, instantly moved "to expunge from the journals of the house all the former proceedings on the subject." He desisted nevertheless from pushing the motion to a division on that evening, and a future day was named for the purpose. But Corbett, the high bailiff, did not delay more than twenty-four hours in making a return of Lord Hood and Fox, as members for Westminster. It would have been more honourable to Pitt's character, as well as to the councils of the crown, if this tardy and reluctant act of justice had been earlier performed: but the hope of expelling the opposition leader from a seat so pain-



fully eminent, overruled every sentiment of liberality, and even of policy, in the bosoms of ministers.

*9th March.*—The debate which arose on the adjourned question, of “expunging from the journals all the past proceedings,” was carried on in a very full house, and terminated at a late hour. Kenyon and Arden distinguished themselves by their defence of administration. Nor did Fox want the aid of the bar to sustain his cause. Scott, who at the hour when I am writing holds the great seal of England, spoke with admirable force against the *scrutiny*, which he denominated illegal, as well as repugnant to justice and to reason. Contrary to their invariable practice when addressing the house, while Fox compressed his matter, the chancellor of the exchequer was diffuse and laboured: so much did the nature of the subject influence their style of oratory! If reason and equity had alone decided the question, Fox must have carried it. Indeed, so sensible were the defenders of the measure that it needed adventitious support, and could not stand on its own proper merits, as to induce them to call on all those individuals who had originally voted for the *scrutiny*, to maintain their own consistency by continuing their sanction to its principle. “The object of the motion before us,” exclaimed the attorney-general (Arden), “is to make gentlemen confess their ignorance, or their corruption. And if we concur in it, we ought all to appear

next week in Westminster Abbey in white sheets, there to do penance for our past transgressions." Pitt, conscious, no doubt, how weak was the ground on which he stood, condescended to address his discourse more to the passions than to the reason and principles of his audience. He reminded them of the contemptuous terms which Fox had used towards those, who at the commencement of the session crowded the house,—“men with whose faces nobody was acquainted.” And he earnestly adjured them “not to confide in those professions of respect, those meretricious blandishments, which the success of one day had inspired, to lure them into a dereliction of principle, a violation of law, and an unmerited self-condemnation.”

Fox, thus personally assailed, not only denied the charge, but added that “it was false, unwarranted, and solely calculated for the purpose of rounding the minister’s periods, with a view of captivating the assembly.” A personal altercation ensued, which was terminated by the speaker; who taking part against Pitt, as the rules of debate compelled him to do, observed that “no member possessed a right of stating words spoken in the course of a former discussion, unless they had been taken down at the time by the clerk at the table.” The chancellor of the exchequer, though pronounced disorderly from the authority of the chair, yet maintained his original assertion,



as Fox did his denial; and the division taking place soon afterwards, the opposition could only number 137 votes, while administration counted 242. The victory was undoubtedly great; as, if ministers had been left in a minority upon such a question, which impugned the legality of their whole proceedings throughout the Westminster election, they must have sustained a proportionate loss of reputation. But the triumph did not extend beyond the threshold of the lobby, public opinion being decidedly adverse to the principle of the *scrutiny*. I constituted one of the ministerial majority on that night; a circumstance which does not, however, in the least alter my sentiments respecting the measure itself, when viewed dispassionately through the medium of time. Only 286 members had been present when the continuation of the *scrutiny* was negatived; but 379 attended on the present occasion, when the decision involved, if not the duration, at least the character of the government. Satisfied with putting an end to the *scrutiny*, and admitting Fox to take his seat in the house as member for Westminster, many of the individuals who supported him on the 3rd of March voted with ministers on the 9th. They wished to control and to restrain, but had no desire to overturn, the administration.

The revolution of a year was now nearly complete since Pitt had attained to the summit of



power, though he had not yet accomplished the twenty-sixth year of his age. Nor, if we except the measure of the *Westminster scrutiny*, which was unquestionably marked with the stamp of persecution, had he in any respect incurred public censure, or disappointed public expectation. His youth, which had afforded to his enemies such ample matter of reproach; far from injuring him in general estimation, rather operated to throw a peculiar grace round his administration. In vain did his opponents enlist wit, poetry, and satire in their service. Yet we must admit that the portrait drawn of him in the "*Rolliad*" is not destitute of resemblance. No man who has seen him in the house of commons during the early stages of his ministerial greatness, when about to mix in the discussion, can fail to recognize Pitt, though the likeness partakes of caricature, and is tinged with the enmity of party. I allude to those couplets, beginning,

"Pert without fire, without experience sage;  
Young, with more art than Shelburne glean'd from age;  
Too proud from pilfer'd greatness to descend,  
Too humble not to call Dundas his friend;  
In solemn dignity and sullen state,  
This new Octavius rises to debate!"

I never peruse the two concluding lines without having Pitt before my eyes. They were peculiarly appropriate in 1784 and 1785, while he might still be considered in the infancy of his

political power. When he became confirmed in office, he dropped much of the sullenness of his manner, substituting more dignity in its place. Those persons who have not beheld Pitt before the French Revolution,—for that awful convulsion, proceeding with gigantic strides, and threatening universal subversion as it advanced, brought him down gradually nearer to the level of mankind,—cannot easily figure to themselves the species of elevation that characterized his deportment. He stood indeed *alone*, as his father, though only secretary of state, had done in the two concluding years of George the Second. Neither Addington, nor Perceval, ever stood *alone*. They were, it is true, invested with the same employments as Pitt; but they never occupied his *place*, either among their colleagues in the cabinet, or with the nation. Yet Perceval was the younger son of an Irish earl, a baron of England, whose illustrious descent might claim the respect derived from remote ancestry. Like Pitt, too, he had been bred to the bar, and possessed very eminent parts. But he wanted the name and the recollections which attached to the great Earl of Chatham's son. Nor did Perceval, after sustaining a siege of many weeks in the house of commons, against Fox, then master of a majority within those walls, finish by liberating the crown from thralldom, and reducing his opponents to a sort of political annihilation. These

were Pitt's resplendent merits, both personal and hereditary, which placed him on an eminence that no other subject has occupied in my time.

Among the individuals who in 1785 enjoyed Pitt's private friendship and confidence, Dundas held the first rank. Thurlow, however great were his endowments, was too intractable, retained too many opinions, principles, or prejudices, and sometimes burst through all ministerial fetters or obligations with too much violence, to be cherished (as the "Rolliad" says, Pretymán was,) in Pitt's præcordia. He could have easily replaced Lord Sydney with a far more able secretary of state. Nor were Lord Carmarthen's talents by any means brilliant; and he possessed too independent a mind for a man who aspired to the cordial friendship of the young minister. The marquis had indeed been originally brought forward, not by Pitt, but by Lord Shelburne, who named him ambassador to the court of Versailles early in 1783, soon after the signature of the preliminaries of peace; though the change in administration which speedily followed it, prevented the accomplishment of his mission. Dundas brought to market qualities rarely combined in the same individual. Conviviality at table: manners, frank, open, and inspiring confidence: eloquence, bold, flowing, energetic, and always at command: principles, accommodating, pliant, suited to every variation in government, and un-



incumbered with modesty or fastidious delicacy. He could not only vote, but speak in support of measures against which he had declaimed and divided in the preceding session. Ambition, guided by judgment, enabled him to perceive that Pitt could, of all men, most surely and speedily open to him the doors of the cabinet, and of the house of peers. To those situations he steadily looked, and for their attainment he considered no sacrifice to be too great. In the hours of private conversation, moistened and exhilarated by wine, when the minister gladly unbent his mind, Dundas won his way, and obtained a pre-eminence in his regard. It only terminated with their joint lives; and the minister's last moments were unquestionably accelerated, as well as embittered, by the impeachment of his friend, followed by its necessary consequences, his loss of office, together with his seat in the cabinet.

To Mr. William Grenville I may assign the second place in Pitt's favour and friendship, at this period of his political career. The ties of consanguinity cemented every other motive derived from mental endowments. Nature had bestowed on him no exterior advantages. His person was heavy, and devoid of elegance or grace; his address, cold and formal; his manners, destitute of suavity. Even his eloquence partook of these defects. In debate, he wanted Pitt's copious

pomp of words, his facility and majesty of expression. The two cousins were equally distinguished by correct moral deportment; and the authors of the "Rolliad," who wanted neither malevolence nor wit in exposing the defects of those whom they selected for attack, were reduced to the necessity of levelling their shafts, not against Mr. Grenville's intellectual, but at his ponderous physical formation. Even Sheridan, whose humour, however elegant and classic, was always dramatic, and who borrowed occasionally from Aristophanes, or from Lucian, as well as from Congreve and Foote, condescended sometimes in debate to use the same weapon.—Jenkinson stood third on Pitt's list of confidential adherents, though necessity and policy had unquestionably a greater share in the selection than inclination. Neither consanguinity nor conviviality produced the union between *them*; but circumstances, scarcely less powerful in their operation, attracted them towards each other. Jenkinson, though not eloquent, possessed a species of knowledge, without which Pitt could not advance a step in matters relating to trade, navigation, manufactures, and all the productions of human industry or labour submitted to taxation. He was the Mentor and the Palinurus, whenever those subjects came before the house. But he likewise was supposed still to retain an influence behind the curtain. The shadowy, undefined



nature of that problematical power, which could only be matter of belief or of assertion, and which was supposed to have become far less formidable since Pitt's nomination to the offices which he held, did not the less secure to Jenkinson universal consideration.—Lord Camden, already far advanced in life, though he enjoyed a distinguished rank among Pitt's friends and supporters, was rather an object of his veneration, than associated to his labours or his pleasures. To the Duke of Richmond I should allot the fourth situation among the group who surrounded the chancellor of the exchequer. He exhibited at this very time the strongest proof of his attachment to that nobleman, and his high opinion of the duke's military talents, by not only defending his character, but by supporting his plans for fortifying Portsmouth and Plymouth, when they were discussed in parliament with much severity. The duke had previously been made a member of the cabinet.

Beyond these four or five favoured individuals stood another phalanx, drawn up in a triple line. Those who composed the *first* row were selected for high birth, at whose head was beheld conspicuous the Marquis of Graham; and near him, on the treasury bench,

——“The dark brow of solemn Hamilton”

attracted attention. Nor must we omit Mr. John Villiers, second son of the Earl of Clarendon, the



“Nireus” of Pitt’s forces, “comely with the flaxen hair.”

Within five years subsequent to this time, the minister, after conferring on him other temporary offices about the court, gave him a permanent and lucrative sinecure, by making him chief justice in eyre, north of Trent. — Parliamentary talents were demanded as a qualification for the *second* row, and among them Wilberforce might claim pre-eminence. The qualities of his mind and understanding lay beneath the surface ; — for his countenance gave no indication of superior intellect. His person was mean, and his features were altogether destitute either of fine expression or of dignity. But he spoke with great perspicuity, as well as fluency, on every subject ; and he spoke from an eminence, representing, as he did, the county of York. Attached to Pitt both from principle and from habits of intimacy, he nevertheless preserved all the integrity, rectitude, and independence of character, which could meet in a member of parliament, sustained by the most correct morals. Pepper Arden and Lord Mulgrave occupied the front rank in this division of the ministerial troops. Behind, were seen various individuals who have filled in our time, and who still continue to fill, the highest offices in the state. I allude particularly to the names of Adington, Dudley Ryder, the Earl of Mornington, and Lord Apsley ; all of whom, though they had

not yet risen to speak in the house, were candidates for future employment.—The *third* and last line demanded neither birth nor talents: obedience, regular attendance, and unlimited devotion, sufficed. They constituted a numerous body, the

“Alcandrumque, Haliumque, Noëmonaque, Prytanimque,” of the house of commons in 1785. I will not enumerate them. Robert Smith, eventually promoted, first to the barons’ bench in Ireland, and afterwards to the same rank of the peerage in England, by Pitt’s friendship or gratitude, was justly esteemed, if not their leader, at least their example.

*14th March.*—Among the most unpopular members of administration, might be accounted the Duke of Richmond. His enemies accused him of domestic parsimony, contrasted with profusion of the public money, as master-general of the ordnance. His kitchen was said to be the coolest apartment in his house, both at Goodwood and in Privy Garden. Thus, the “*Rolliad*,” apostrophizing him, exclaims,

“Whether thou go’st, while summer suns prevail,  
T’ enjoy the freshness of thy kitchen’s gale,  
Where, unpolluted by luxurious heat,  
Its large expanse affords a cool retreat.”

Nor did his present loyalty and attachment to the sovereign, against whom he had declaimed in a

manner very personal, during the progress of the American war, afford less matter for ludicrous animadversion. But, more than either, his passion for fortifications, and the works by which he projected to defend our great naval arsenals against invasion, excited the vigilant attention of parliament. The subject was discussed with much asperity, when the ordnance estimates came under consideration ; James Luttrell, surveyor-general of that branch of the military department, youngest of the four sons of Lord Carhampton, opening the business. During the contest between Great Britain and her colonies, while commanding the " Mediator," a forty-four gun frigate, Luttrell had distinguished himself both by the pen and by the sword. Nevertheless, his encomiums on the Duke of Richmond's plans did not produce conviction in the minds of his audience. Macbride, one of the two representatives for Plymouth, and a captain of the royal navy, to whom had been entrusted, in 1772, the commission of bringing off on board his ship the Queen Matilda of Denmark, then detained a prisoner in the Castle of Cronsberg ;—this officer, a man of blunt manners and of rude eloquence, but possessing strong sense, and an accurate local knowledge of the tract of ground in the vicinity of Plymouth which it was proposed to fortify, contradicted the principal facts alleged by Luttrell. Courtenay, who never omitted to avail himself of the aid of wit,



as an auxiliary to reason and argument, assailed the Duke of Richmond's projected fortifications, with all the force of ridicule. Having observed how unfortunately it happened for his country, that his grace's passion for engineering should have manifested itself at so advanced a period of life; Courtenay then called on Barré to declare, whether the engineers convened by the master-general of the ordnance to meet at the Tower, for the purpose of discussing his estimates, had or had not given them any sanction? "Has Colonel Debbeige in particular," added he, "an officer so universally esteemed for probity and science, been called on to state his opinion respecting these fortifications?"

Barré, who was not unprepared for this appeal; probably indeed acting in concert with Courtenay, and with the Marquis of Lansdown; instantly presented himself to the Speaker's notice. His aspect, his reputation as a member of the house, but, more than either, his personal infirmities, attracted great attention. Long menaced with a privation of sight, Barré was now become totally blind; a circumstance to which he pathetically alluded, when he observed with an exclamation of deep concern, that "to his memory alone he could henceforward recur for assistance in stating or recalling facts." With even more personal acrimony than Courtenay or than Macbride had exhibited, he attacked the master-general himself,

rather than his plans. After drawing an invidious comparison between the noblemen who had preceded the Duke of Richmond in that great office during several years, from Earl Ligonier down to Lord Townsend; "all of whom," he said, "were men of tried bravery, military knowledge, and experience;" he asked, "Can the present master-general state himself to have commanded armies, like his predecessors in that employment, and conducted them to victory?—It is demanded of me," concluded he, "whether I know Colonel Debbeige? I know him well, know his honesty and worth. I am concerned to add that I know him to be oppressed." The officer in question, who was one of the six colonel-commandants of the corps of engineers, and whose reputation for professional ability stood high, having disapproved the duke's plans, had incurred his displeasure. And, as placability was not commonly supposed to constitute a prominent feature of his grace's character, it might be feared that the colonel, by this conduct, had sacrificed his fortune to his principles. The "Rolliad," adverting to these well-known facts, thus apostrophizes him:

"Learn, thoughtless Debbeige, now no more a youth,

The woes unnumber'd that encompass truth!"—

"Oh! learn on happier terms with him to live,

Who ne'er knew *twice*, the weakness to forgive!"

General Burgoyne having expressed a similar



condemnation of the duke's projects, while not a word in their justification or support was uttered from any part of the house, Dundas himself remaining silent, Pitt felt it indispensable to concede, for the present, to the weight of public opinion. Aware that he might be left in a minority, if he persisted in urging the question to a division on that night; the minister consented to allow the sum already granted, (which amounted to fifty thousand pounds, destined for the fortifications,) to remain untouched, till parliament should have come to an ultimate decision on the subject. But, having thus given way respecting the principal point, he stood forward to rescue his friend from the imputations thrown on his military skill. After reverting to Barré's quæres touching the master-general's personal services in the field, "Yes," answered the minister, "I will boldly assert that my noble friend possesses practical experience, though he never has commanded an army, nor led on troops to victory. I am happy to declare that he is a member of the cabinet. To my good fortune in being closely connected with a nobleman of his active virtue, of his recognized ability and experience in his department; but, above all, of his systematic economy in every matter that regards the public interest; I attribute much of the national favour which has hitherto accompanied and honoured my administration." Relative to Debbeige, Pitt wisely observed a total silence.



His whole panegyric on the duke seemed to be peculiarly levelled, not so much at Macbride, at Courtenay, or at Burgoyne, as against Barré; and through him, unquestionably at the Marquis of Lansdown, from which quarter he probably suspected that the attack principally originated. The fortifications, arrested in their progress, remained thus suspended till the ensuing session.

*16th March—11th April.*—In consequence of the long duration of the American war, terminated by the emancipation of the thirteen colonies, many new and unexpected circumstances had arisen, commercial, as well as political, which demanded from ministers mature deliberation, or enlightened and patient consideration. Among these, none appeared to claim more prompt attention, than the state of the convicts sentenced to the punishment of transportation; who, from the inability of conveying them across the Atlantic to their antient destinations, had accumulated in the jails of the kingdom, to the number of several thousands. The cabinet seemed irresolute in deciding to what quarter of the globe they should be sent; and an island in the river Gambia, on the western coast of Africa, was at length selected for the purpose. Burke, whose active philanthropy, stimulated by enmity towards ministers, rendered him vigilant to discover abuses, and eager to expose them; rising in his place, demanded “what was to be done with those un-

happy wretches sentenced by the law to undergo transportation?" "I trust," continued he, "Gambia is not the place intended for their reception; a country of which it may be truly asserted, that there '*all life dies, and all death lives.*' The gates of hell are there open night and day, to receive the victims sent from hence. It may be denominated the capital seat of pestilence, plague, and famine. But, deprivation of life was not in the contemplation of the judges who passed sentence on them. This fact loudly calls for the attention of the legislature." Not discouraged by the inefficacy of his first appeal to the house, he renewed the application soon after the termination of the Easter recess. Pitt endeavouring to elude his enquiries, and having treated him with some severity of animadversion, for introducing a subject foreign to the business of the day; Burke, unintimidated by the interference of the Speaker, who endeavoured to silence him as disorderly, retorted on the minister with extraordinary force of language.

"Seventy-five of these unfortunate men," exclaimed he, "I understand, are now on board a vessel in the Thames, which may sail before tomorrow's dawn. The wind will speedily carry them beyond the interference of parliament. I call upon the chancellor of the exchequer. His majesty, by his coronation oath, has sworn to execute judgment in mercy. He is the trustee of

that solemn royal pledge. The jails are crowded far beyond all former precedent. There is a house in London which contains at this time precisely five hundred and fifty-eight. I do not mean, the house of commons, though the numbers are alike in both ; but, the jail of Newgate. Contagious distempers may ensue ; and on every view of the subject, I again invoke the interposition of parliament !” This eloquent and pathetic appeal, though it failed to produce an immediate effect, and was not followed up by any specific *motion*, yet did not the less operate to redress the evil. The cabinet, compelled to abandon the pestilential banks of the Gambia, in the course of the subsequent year made choice of a portion of the earth better calculated for every object of policy and punishment, without losing sight of humanity. I allude to the settlement of Botany Bay, situate in the other hemisphere, in a happy latitude, on the eastern coast of New Holland. There, probably, in the course of two or three centuries, may arise, along the shores of the Pacific and Indian oceans, a vast empire, and a civilized, yet martial people ; who, after subjecting the immense archipelago scattered by nature at the extremity of Asia, from New Guinea quite to Japan, will perhaps contest for the naval supremacy of the Pacific itself, with their countrymen established on the western shores of America. Such are the modes by which Providence diffuses



moral, as well as religious light, over the dark and savage portions of the planet ; transferring knowledge, civilization, liberty, and science, successively from one extremity of the earth to the other, in the lapse of revolving ages. Who can say that before the year 2500 from Christ, Europe, and peculiarly the western nations of this favoured quarter of the globe, now so illuminated, may not sink into the condition of Egypt, of the lesser Asia, and of Greece ; — countries to which we fondly turn our eyes, as the cradles of art, of poetry, and of history ! May not England fall to the level of that spot, which has been so beautifully denominated,

“ Land of lost gods, and godlike men ! ”

while Van Diemen's Land, or California, (in whose vicinity, Swift, hardly more than a century ago, placed his Lilliput and his Brobdingnag, as if out of the reach of geographical pursuit,) may enjoy freedom, arts, and letters !

*11th April.*—The state of the public revenue, after the termination of an expensive and disgraceful contest, in the progress of which we had suffered so great a defalcation of territory, necessarily engrossed universal attention. Pitt having stated, in a manner equally luminous and concise, the produce of the existing taxes ; which he demonstrated to exhibit an encrease, during the last year, of at least a million and a half sterling ; concluded by announcing his confident hope of esta-

blishing a sinking fund, in the course of the ensuing session. That fund, arising out of the overplus of the revenue, he estimated at a million sterling. Fox instantly rose, and while he cautioned the house against too sanguine a reliance on financial calculations, which futurity might not realize, he expressed the most zealous co-operation in every measure for supporting the national credit. "I thank God," said he, "whatever difference of opinion may take place on other points, all parties are agreed in this respect! I trust, however, that the fund destined for so salutary a purpose will be made as ample as possible. One million a year appears to me too *small* a sum for producing extensive benefit, when we calculate the chances against the duration of peace." Lord Mahon, on the contrary, maintained that if any fault could be imputed to his friend's plan, it lay in creating so *large* a fund for the redemption of the public debt. But the minister, far from yielding his assent to this last proposition, though coming from a quarter for which he professed much respect, avowed that he felt a difficulty in resisting the temptation to apply even a greater sum than one million to the object in question, if it could be obtained without too severely augmenting the public burthens. Yet when pressed by Dempster, in the course of the discussion, to commence immediately so beneficial an operation of finance, and not delay it to another session; he replied, that "he conceived it

more wise, as well as safe, to postpone it for one year, as time would enable him to ascertain whether the favourable expectations which he entertained of an encrease in the revenue should be justified by futurity." Having thus prepared the nation, as well as parliament, for the adoption of so salutary a measure, he deferred its completion to the spring of 1786.

*18th April.* — These financial regulations were followed by Pitt's third and last attempt to reform the representation in the house of commons. It was a day of much expectation, and produced a very full attendance, all being anxious to witness the extraordinary spectacle of the first minister moving such a proposition. Pitt performed it with his accustomed ability, set off by the attractions of a most seductive eloquence; observing, that "though he had twice failed in his preceding endeavours, yet he was encouraged to renew the experiment in consequence of two favourable circumstances." "The reform that I now propose," continued he, "coincides with the ideas of the best, as well as of the most moderate men; and the present assembly being newly elected, has not, like the last, put a negative on it." He then developed in the most lucid manner, his plan, the basis of which was, to purchase the franchises of thirty-six boroughs, so decayed, or so venal, as to be no longer worthy of sending representatives to parliament, and to transfer their right of elec-



tion to the counties. This great change, by which seventy-two members would be taken from an unsound part of the legislative body, and thrown into the more independent or upright portion of the house, it must be owned, was highly attractive in theory. The *motion* with which he concluded, for leave to bring in a *bill* to amend the representation of the people of England in parliament, was strenuously supported by the two members for the county of York; Duncombe seconding it, and Wilberforce maintaining it by plausible, if not solid arguments.

Powis, who rose at an early period of the debate, combined great powers of elocution with judgment and principle. His speech, brilliant, animated, and convincing, was not unaccompanied with wit, but under the control of reason. All the specious axioms of the chancellor of the exchequer, from which he deduced his asserted amelioration of the constitution, Powis attacked in succession. With peculiar propriety he reminded Pitt that it was not a county member, or the representative of some opulent city, who, only a few years preceding, had in that assembly moved, "That this house is bound to listen to the petitions of the people." "No," exclaimed he, "that *motion*, which would have done honour to the representative of the first county in England, was made by a person who then sate here for Old Sarum, (Lord Camelford,) one of those

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rotten boroughs destined by the present plan to be disfranchised. But, if this principle is to form the foundation of the projected reform, how happens it that the treasury, admiralty, and ordnance boroughs, are to be exempted from its operation?"—"Much stress has been laid on the corruption of the present times; yet, with what decency can the minister assert, in the face of so popular an assembly as he now addresses, that unless reformed, they do not express the sense of the country? A late administration, it may perhaps be pretended, was corrupt, and on its ruin was raised a government of opinion. A high opinion, indeed, we must necessarily entertain of ministers, who, as we know, *do not cherish or employ any individual that has been formerly an agent of corruption.*" This pointed sarcasm, rendered more personal by the presence of Dundas and of Jenkinson, who were seated near Pitt, excited a burst of Hear hims! "I will not," concluded Powis, "treat with any reserve, or respect, the *motion* before the house. Hostile as I regard it to the constitution, I will meet it in the teeth, and give it my unequivocal negative."

Nor was Lord North less able and eloquent on that evening, than Powis; but, with his arguments, he mingled, as was his custom, more ridicule. Having remarked how few petitions had been presented to the house in favour of reform, the whole number not exceeding *eight*; "What,"



demanded he, "are we to infer from this circumstance? Is it apathy in the people? We were taught to believe that all England would with one voice support the plan for amending the national representation. Well may I exclaim with the man in *The Rehearsal*,

"What horrid sound of silence doth assail mine ear!"

Even Fox, though he supported Pitt's *principle*, yet resisted its *application* upon many points. While he spoke and voted with the minister, he did not the less forcibly point out the incongruities and contradictions which met in Pitt's proposition. "I cannot perceive," observed Fox, "any superlative excellence in the present house of commons, which can justify a suspension for six years, of the operation of the *bill* before us. No very flattering proofs of attention to the rights of the people have been exhibited by the majority within these walls, in their support of the *Westminster scrutiny*."—"As little do I approve the means taken to carry into execution the principle, in various other respects. Never will I agree to admit the compulsory purchase from a majority of the electors, of a franchise which is the property of the whole body." Even upon the feature of the bill which seemed most formed to captivate, namely, an augmentation of the number of representatives for counties, Fox was not less severe. "I wholly disapprove," said



he, "the idea of limiting parliamentary seats to men of ample fortunes, or of eminence in their professions. The history of this country proves that we are not to expect from individuals in affluent circumstances, the vigilance, energy, and exertion, without which the house of commons would lose its greatest force and weight. Human nature is too prone to indulgence; and the most meritorious public services have always been performed by persons in a condition of life removed from opulence." The truth of these remarks, forcibly exemplified in his own person, and in that of Pitt, unquestionably made a deep impression.

The sentiment was not effaced by Dundas, who only excited a laugh at his own expence, when, rising as Fox concluded, he began with declaring that he considered it his duty to state the *reasons* which induced him to support the question; while Bankes, whose independent mind revolted at every sacrifice of principle to private friendship, or to personal elevation, did not hesitate to oppose it. "I am," said he, "a thorough advocate for parliamentary reform, but I do not the less reprobate the proposition now before us. It carries contradiction on its face: for it sanctions the sale and purchase of that very franchise, which it declares at the same time never ought to become an object of traffic." So sensible was the minister to this observation, and to the quarter

from which it came, that he immediately rose to obviate its effect. He did not, indeed, hesitate to avow that it wounded him deeply, "on account of the long and intimate friendship, mingled with just veneration, which he nourished for the person who thus attacked his measure." He even admitted the part of the *bill* in question to constitute a *tender* feature in its formation, though impossible to be erased or omitted when carrying the proposed reform into execution. Pitt addressed his short speech, which terminated the debate, exclusively to Bankes; seeming, like Julius in the senate house, to exclaim, "*Et tu, Brute, fili mi!*" Probably, Bankes lost the peerage by his elevated line of conduct on this, and on other occasions; as Cardinal Mazarin observed of Mademoiselle de Montpensier, who wished to marry Louis the Fourteenth, but who fired the cannon of the Bastile upon him, "*Elle a tué son mari.*" The division, which did not take place till near four in the morning, rescued the constitution from Pitt's experiment. Two hundred and forty-eight persons, of whom I was one, negatived it: one hundred and seventy-four supported the minister. It was his last attempt to ameliorate our form of government. Time, reflection, and the awful example held out to mankind by France, subsequently restrained his ardour, finally inducing him rather to bear with the defects of the British constitution, great as



they may be, than to risk its total overthrow. I am nevertheless decidedly of opinion, in 1821, that a temperate parliamentary reform must, will, and ought to be adopted.

About this time, in the spring of 1785, appeared those celebrated productions, denominated the “*Rolliad*,” and the “*Probationary Odes*.” The “*Rolliad*” assumed the shape of criticisms on an imaginary poem, and might be termed poetico-prosaic; while the “*Odes*,” to the number of twenty or more, were poetical compositions, for the greater part Pindaric. Both abounded with classic allusions, and the keenest satire; decorated with the graces of verse, borrowing aid from the finest writers of antiquity; sparing no individuals, however elevated by rank, ability, or office; but levelling their shafts principally at the sovereign, at Pitt, Dundas, and Jenkinson. They obtained a prodigious circulation, from the union of taste, malevolence, learning, and wit, which illuminated every part of them; having passed through two-and-twenty editions in the lapse of about twenty-seven years, between 1785 and 1812. Their reputed author was Mr. Joseph Richardson, who, I believe, inhabited one of the inns of court, and followed the profession of the law. With him were, however, joined various other men of talents, who contributed their respective quotas. At their head I should place Mr. George Ellis, a man well known in the lite-



rary world, as well as in the diplomatic, and higher circles of society. But I have reason to suppose that General Burgoyne, Fitzpatrick, Mr. John Townsend, (now Lord John,) and others of Fox's friends or admirers, not only retouched some of the passages: they furnished whole odes. I omit Sheridan's name, because he positively denied, in the house of commons, having had any participation in the productions. Even now, after the lapse of three-and-thirty years, though the far greater number of the individuals who are lashed or ridiculed in the "Rolliad," and the "Probationary Odes," have passed away; for I am one of the few survivors; yet they cannot be perused without exciting the most animated emotions.

The present Lord Rolle, then a commoner, and one of the two representatives for the county of Devon, constituted the hero of the "Rolliad." His figure was handsome, as far as mere symmetry of limbs and regularity of features can deserve that epithet: for Nature had denied him all pretension to grace or elegance. Neither was his understanding apparently more cultivated, than his manners were refined. He reminded me always of a Devonshire rustic; but he possessed plain common sense, a manly mind, and the faculty of stating his ideas in a few strong words. Representing a great maritime county, warmly attached to ministers, and looking constantly to the peerage

as his reward, he nevertheless preserved the independence of his character. Whatever ridicule the "Rolliad" has affected to throw upon his family, by making him descend from Rollo the Norman, in the tenth century; his ancestors were men of property and consideration in the county of Devon, at least ever since the reign of Henry the Eighth. There had even been a British peerage in the line, Mr. Rolle's uncle, Henry, having been raised to the dignity of a baron, by George the Second, though the title expired in his own person. His nephew might therefore reasonably hope to revive it, by lending a steady support to administration; and he eventually obtained his object in 1796, after twelve years of hard parliamentary service. Rolle had early rendered himself obnoxious to the *opposition*; first, by the severity of his comments on Fox's recall of Rodney, in May 1782; and subsequently, by his reflections on Burke's contempt of public opinion, in May 1783, when as paymaster, he restored Powell and Bembridge to their respective offices, after the discovery made of their malversations. It is nevertheless probable that these two offences would scarcely have procured him the distinction of giving his name to the "Rollaid," if he had not aggravated them afterwards, by throwing out some pointed animadversions against Fox, during the session of 1784, when Rolle treated with contemptuous levity his complaints respecting

the violated rights of the electors of Westminster. This last attack filling up the measure of his political transgressions as a member of parliament, subjected him to the punishment of being stretched on the rack of satire.

*20th April.*—Precisely at this period, Pitt moved the repeal of a tax which he himself had laid upon cotton in the preceding year, on account of the clamour excited by its operation among the manufacturers in the northern counties of the kingdom. Fox, while he seconded the *motion*, inveighed with acrimony against the financial system of the chancellor of the exchequer; and Sheridan brought forward an amendment calculated to shew that the manufacturers being *aggrieved* by the tax, it was become *necessary* to explain and alter it. He added, “I passed part of last summer in Lancashire, and was an eye-witness to the exertions made by them to tranquillize their numerous workmen, as well as to preserve the general tranquillity of the country.” Rolle suddenly interposing at this point of the discussion, accused Sheridan with inflaming the public mind, and exciting by his speech general alarm or discontent. “I will not assert,” continued he, “*who* was the person that went down to Lancashire in order to indispose the manufacturers against the taxes, and to promote tumult. Neither will I say *who* it was that distributed seditious and inflammatory handbills throughout the



country. But, such was the fact ; and if I could bring the proof home to the party whom I suspect, *I would take the proper steps to have his head stuck upon Temple Bar.*” An insinuation so serious, accompanied with such menaces, could not be allowed to pass unnoticed by those against whom they were directed. Fox observed, that the empty threat of sticking heads upon Temple Bar merited no reply, as he believed there did not exist any law which made the distribution of handbills a capital offence. “ I am ignorant, however,” added he, “ of the fact itself, and I presume the honourable gentleman is too much a man of honour to make an assertion which he knows he cannot prove.”

Sheridan rising in his turn, vindicated himself from the charge of pronouncing inflammatory speeches. “ With regard to the handbills,” said he, “ I really know nothing respecting them ; but I can easily conjecture the reason of the soreness expressed on the article of publications. *Compositions less prosaic, though more popular*, I believe, have produced that irritability. I am aware that he may suspect *me* to have been the author of those productions, or at least to have had some connexion with them. I do assure him, however, upon my honour, that I never saw one line of them till they met my eye in the newspaper.” The allusion to the “ *Rolliad*,” which was then in universal circulation, excited general

laughter; and Rolle, incensed to the highest degree, notwithstanding Sheridan's denial, started up, exclaiming, "I hold the author of those works, let him be whom he may, as well as the works themselves, in sovereign contempt; but, *as the cap fits the two gentlemen, they are welcome to wear it.* With respect to the law prohibiting seditious handbills and their circulation, if no such act exists, there ought to be one enacted; and if I knew the person who has committed the offence, I would take the proper measures for bringing him to punishment." However pointed was this language, it had not hitherto discomposed a muscle of Sheridan's countenance, which rarely, indeed, manifested any symptom of anger or irritation. Assuming nevertheless a serious air, "While," observed he, "the gentleman shoots his bolts at random, I shall take no notice of them; but if he charges *me* with having any concern in circulating seditious handbills, I shall reply to him, both here and elsewhere, in very plain and very coarse terms." The conversation now terminated, Rolle remaining silent, and having only exposed himself needlessly by his interference, as the chancellor of the exchequer did not come forward, either to justify his insinuation, or to cover his retreat.

*May.*—Great mutual asperity and personalities between Pitt and Fox characterized the whole session. There never perhaps existed a man in



whose bosom the passions of jealousy, envy, or resentment, found less place than in Fox's, however vehement he might be when declaiming in the house of commons. Nor did Pitt possess less elevation of mind ; but he wanted his antagonist's placability and prompt oblivion of political animosities. Pitt's principles were less pliant and accommodating ; his manners more retired, and destitute of warmth ; his temper was more irritable, and his expressions were more eloquently offensive. We must likewise consider that Fox, at thirty-six, beheld himself, in consequence of his own want of prudence and moderation, expelled from employment, necessitous, and surrounded with difficulties. Pitt, on the contrary, at only twenty-six, stood on the very pinnacle of royal and popular favour, invested with power, and sustained by official emoluments. It demanded, therefore, far more philosophy in the chief of opposition, than in the minister, to practise the advice of Horace to Dellius.

*9th and 10th May.*—In the irritated state of their feelings, scarcely any discussion arose which did not produce demonstrations of reciprocal animosity. Among the taxes which, in opening his *budget*, Pitt proposed to the house, was one to be raised on maid-servants, amounting to half-a-crown annually on each individual where only a single female was retained. Fox objected to it ; adding, " I am not impelled to oppose this tax



from any motives of a factious, or party description; for I had no participation in the measures which have rendered necessary such heavy burthens." The remark gave rise to an acrimonious conversation, in the course of which the chancellor of the exchequer made some very invidious reflections on the *coalition* between Lord North and Fox. That nobleman was not present; but Jenkinson being seated near Pitt on the treasury bench, Sheridan observed that "his friend had indeed formed a coalition with the noble lord, which union he avowed, and was ready to defend; whereas the minister had formed a coalition, of which he took every occasion to convince the house he was ashamed." Jenkinson, thus designated, stood up, and after stating that he could not avoid taking notice of allusions which were evidently levelled at himself, added, "I by no means wish to deny that I supported many of Lord North's measures, during his administration; but, in the office which I filled as secretary at war, I was not responsible for the ministerial plans sent me from the treasury." Having vindicated himself on this point, by shewing that he only performed a subordinate part during the American contest, he next adverted to the tax on female servants, which formed the subject of debate. With a degree of humour which I never knew him display on any other occasion, "I apprehend," said he, "that this *Maid's Tragedy* is

only played off as a performance calculated to expose the minister, rather than as a serious ground of complaint against the proposed tax, which is imposed with so light a hand, that no person can justly term it a grievance."

Courtenay, nevertheless, unwilling to let pass so fair an opportunity of attacking Pitt, and setting at defiance all ordinary rules of parliamentary decorum, presented himself to the Speaker's notice. Having first exhorted the chancellor of the exchequer to take warning by the fate of Orpheus, who fell a victim to his want of indulgence towards the other sex; he observed that the measure was directed against a commodity at which no other minister had ever ventured publicly to point. Adverting next to the memorable history of Wat Tyler's rebellion, "Then," said he, "for the first time in modern ages, was started the idea of taxing female commodities. But, it being alledged that the object of taxation was not yet arrived at sufficient maturity to become liable to such an operation of finance, an exciseman was dispatched to examine into the affair. He having previously consulted *the then master of the rolls*, that law-officer gave it as his decided opinion, that *such a scrutiny was legal*. It produced, however, as we know, a violent insurrection, which could not be suppressed without much bloodshed." The allusion to Kenyon and the Westminster scrutiny was followed by a sar-

casm levelled at Jenkinson, who had recently stopped up a number of windows in his country-house of Addiscombe Place, near Croydon, on account of the heavy additional duty laid on them by Pitt, in the preceding session.

“With respect,” continued Courtenay, “to the opinion delivered from the treasury bench, that the tax on maid-servants is so light as not to be worthy of evasion, or to merit the name of a grievance; I can assure the house, that individuals, however exalted may be their rank, or however affluent their fortune, notwithstanding *they enjoy six or seven sinecure pensions, yet have not the less thought proper to block up most of their windows, in order to evade the commutation tax.*”—“Ireland,” concluded he, “is a country to which, in common with the chancellor of the exchequer, I feel much attachment; and I can answer for it, that the present measure is not *an Irish proposition*. No act of administration, on the contrary, can render him more unpopular in the sister kingdom, than taxing such a commodity; and on these grounds I make no question of being supported by every Irish member.” I have given the salient points of Courtenay’s speech, which I heard him pronounce, because its personalities, when added to its indecorum, may convey some idea of the nature, language, and limits of debate in 1785. Such violations of decency, however highly seasoned they might be with Attic wit, and enriched



by classic citations,—for no man better knew than Courtenay, how to invoke at will, Horace or Juvenal, Pope or Prior,—yet, from the greater refinement of the present times, would scarcely be tolerated within the walls of the house of commons in 1818.

But the great feature which characterized the session under review, was the attempt made by administration to form a commercial union with Ireland. It is commonly known in our parliamentary history by the name of “The Irish Propositions;” and to *them* Courtenay made allusion, when he asserted that “a tax on servant-maids would not by any means be an *Irish proposition*.” Unquestionably, after the political emancipation of Ireland from British supremacy, and all legislative control, which took place in 1782, the wish to re-unite the two countries by the chain of mutual benefits, and an equal participation of the advantages of trade, was worthy of a patriot minister. But, if the project did honour to its authors, the means by which they intended to realize it did not appear to have received all the previous consideration requisite for a subject of such magnitude, intricacy, and vast national importance. Pitt, when he undertook so arduous, as well as complicated a work, demanding an intimate acquaintance with all the ramifications of trade between the two kingdoms, had not, however, the presumption to trust solely to his own

knowledge. On Jenkinson he principally, and almost exclusively, relied; only reserving to himself the task of explaining the project, and decorating it with all the graces of persuasion. We may safely assume that the peerage to which Jenkinson was elevated in the succeeding year, constituted the remuneration stipulated for his assistance in maturing and supporting this favourite measure of the minister. Mr. Orde, (since raised likewise to the British peerage,) then secretary for Ireland, opened it under the form of *propositions*, in the house of commons of that kingdom, early in the month of February; and after the interval of about a fortnight, they having been assented to in the Irish parliament, Pitt regularly introduced the business from the treasury bench. The propositions, or articles of commercial union, eleven in number, were read; and the great principles on which reposed the system itself, received all the illustration which could be derived from eloquence. Far, however, from yielding an immediate assent to the plan, however seductive in theory, Lord North, Fox, and Eden, while they professed a desire to receive further elucidation, and to reserve their final opinion till they should be better informed, nevertheless started, even in this early stage, many doubts respecting the policy and the practicability of the measure itself.

Throughout the months of March and April,



various discussions took place relative to it, in all of which the impediments to its completion seemed to multiply and gain strength. The minister, Fox observed, had begun in the wrong place, by communicating the propositions to the Irish parliament before they were laid on the table of the English house of commons;—a remark which, I own, appeared to me to be just. Very early in March, petitions began to pour in against it; first, from Liverpool; next, from Manchester; and about the middle of the month, Mr. Stanley, one of the representatives for the county of Lancaster, presented a petition transmitted to him by his constituents, with eighty thousand annexed signatures. Such an opposition, not made by individuals within the walls of the house, to whom factious motives might have been imputed, but originating among the commercial and manufacturing classes, might, it was natural to suppose, have compelled the administration to pause before they pushed forward their plan. Every obstacle or remonstrance which arose, appeared nevertheless rather to irritate, than to convince, or to arrest, the chancellor of the exchequer; who reluctantly, and after considerable difficulty, acquiesced in allowing the different petitioners to be separately heard by counsel at the bar of the house. Nearly twelve weeks unavoidably elapsed in these examinations; throughout the whole of which time, Jenkinson per-



formed, if not the first, certainly the second part. Nor was it till the month of May was considerably advanced, that Pitt brought forward *the propositions*, now augmented from eleven to twenty-seven, as well as modified and altered upon many material points.

12th May.—Few debates which have ever arisen in either house of parliament, can compete in importance or in interest with the discussion of that memorable evening. The attendance bore a proportion to the magnitude of the subject; the numbers on the division exceeding, I believe, any which had been witnessed within those walls since the concluding weeks of Lord North's administration. Pitt opened the subject with consummate ability; but, as it appeared to me, with the oratory of a sophist, or a rhetorician, rather than in the temperate and well-matured language of a wise statesman. On the contrary, Fox, though, in my opinion, too diffuse, (a fault which distinguished almost every speech that he made on great occasions,) yet exhibited a far more unprejudiced, comprehensive, calm, and sound intellect, than his adversary. He appealed solely to the reason and understanding of his audience: while the chancellor of the exchequer, confident of being supported by an overwhelming majority, seemed to think that he might substitute his own will in the place of those commanding motives of state policy, which ought alone to have determined his

conduct. After exposing under various aspects the contradictions, the pertinacity, the injurious consequences, and the political errors that met in the ministerial plan, Fox reverted to topics of a personal nature. Jenkinson formed the object of these observations, which laid bare to inspection the concealed net-work by which, as Fox asserted, the minister was held in dependance *on the secret adviser of the sovereign*. The board of trade, abolished in 1782, having been erected anew within three years after its suppression, under the denomination of a “committee of council for the superintendence of commerce,” Jenkinson was placed at its head. Fox directed all the severity of his animadversions against this appointment, which again called out Jenkinson into public and active employment under government, after he had remained ever since Lord North’s resignation, without office, in a species of political eclipse.

These remarks were followed by others, calculated to exhibit the minister as a mere puppet, controlled by an unseen but superior power. “Until of late,” exclaimed Fox, “he has affected to disclaim any connexion with *certain obnoxious characters*. In a high tone, he disavowed and reprobated all friendship with *the individual who has long been suspected of exercising an unconstitutional influence over the government of this country*. Such was his language at the time when a momentary popularity, founded on delusion, placed

him, as he conceived, above *the degradation of such an alliance*. The case is now altered. He has involved himself by his temerity, his confidence in his own ability, and his presumption, in a dilemma relative to Ireland, from which he knows not how to extricate himself. *Misery makes us acquainted with strange companions*. Now that he begins to feel his weakness and insecurity, his expressions are less inflated, and his proud rejection of obnoxious associates is heard no more.

“Telephus et Peleus, cum pauper et exul uterque,  
Projicit ampullas, et sesquipedalia verba.”

He is now reduced to invoke assistance on any terms, and from any quarter. The *Irish propositions*, ill digested, and framed for the surrender of every object dear to the people of Great Britain, have excited universal alarm. He is fallen from his elevation. Hence it arises, that *the light of influence has condescended to shine down upon him with unusual lustre*. He has been openly comforted and caressed.”

It might have been supposed that a minister accustomed to meet, and to repel, every accusation which the ingenuity of party could fabricate, and little disposed to give quarter when misrepresented or attacked, would have risen to efface the impression made by Fox's speech. I own, I anticipated it with a sort of certainty. He nevertheless sate silent. His conduct had been differ-



ent on the 12th of January 1784, when, under a similar imputation, he instantly denied his knowledge of any secret influence. But he was not then supported by a majority. Jenkinson indeed attempted to answer Fox's objections to the *propositions*; but he neither noticed, nor did he resent, nor still less did he deny, the imputation of maintaining a secret communication with the sovereign. He observed indeed, that personal allusions had been made to himself; only adding, "No charge can, however, be brought against me, except a steady adherence to the party with whom I am connected in politics." The discussion having already been protracted almost till five in the morning; and sixteen new *resolutions* having grown out of the original eleven, to the probable operation or effect of which the far greater part of the members present were necessarily strangers; an immediate adjournment was moved by Lord North. A violent cry of *Question* arising from the ministerial benches, Fox attempted to arrest their impatience, by representing, that if they persisted to force a division, they must make up their minds to wait several hours longer before it took place. "The question," added he, "is big with destruction to the empire; and I therefore beseech the minister, for the honour of this assembly, as he values the prosperity of the two countries, as he respects his own character, to allow us to pause, and to

resume the debate on a future day!" Some moments of suspense took place, Pitt declining to make any reply; when Dundas rising, observed with a smile, that the appearance of the morning was pleasing in the highest degree. "The house," continued he, "seem to be in good spirits; and there is no impediment to prevent the right honourable gentleman from entertaining us, if he thinks proper, with a speech of two or three hours. The circumstance is one to which this audience is accustomed, and it cannot be doubted that they will listen to him with pleasure."

A refusal to adjourn, rendered still more irritating by the mode and language in which it was conveyed, called up Rigby, formerly the friend and ally of Dundas, though now enlisted under the banners of the *coalition*. He reprobated the conduct of ministers on the occasion; but he no longer excited the attention with which, during Lord North's administration, he was heard whenever he mixed in debate. Lord Surrey and others, nevertheless, sustaining Fox's demand of immediate adjournment, and Pitt persisting in sullen silence, Powis declared that the state of his health would not permit him to remain any longer in so crowded a house. He demanded, therefore, time, as indispensable for enabling him to comprehend and examine the new *propositions* submitted to their consideration. Having asked whether many gentlemen present were not in a



similar predicament, he added, "If they are, they will not act conscientiously unless they vote with *me*. They must be, on the contrary, traitors, lost to every principle of honour and of honesty, if they vote with the minister on a question of such national importance, which they acknowledge that they do not understand." Pitt, who dreaded the effect of Powis's appeal, having observed, that, "notwithstanding this ostentatious display of conscience, honour, and honesty, he believed there were many individuals present of as pure integrity, and as respectable characters, who could conscientiously vote with him upon the question," Powis rose a second time. "It is not my intention," replied he, "to encroach on the special prerogative arrogated by the chancellor of the exchequer; the right of using *insulting language* to members of this assembly. As little do I mean to invade his peculiar privilege of using sarcastic expressions towards all those who differ from him in opinion, together with every other *personal affront* suggesting itself to an irritable and inflammatory temper. But I will repeat, that those persons who do not understand *the propositions* any more than myself, cannot conscientiously vote for the question."

Fox having likewise depicted the difficulty of comprehending a subject so complicated, added, "*He* must possess an intellect not given to the general race of mankind, and infinitely superior



to any that *I* can claim, who pretends, on so transient a view of the present measure, to decide upon its merits. If, without understanding it, he blindly supports it, he is guilty of such a violation of his duty as no subsequent penitence can expiate. He sacrifices the commerce of his country to *the whistling of a name*. The minister who can stake his official existence on the success of the question before us, must be lost to all sense of character: while he who servilely acquiesces, sinks below the situation of a senator, and disgraces the name of an Englishman." Notwithstanding these severe denunciations, two members had the courage to rise, and to avow that they stood precisely in the predicament described; namely, of not understanding *the propositions*, and yet being ready to vote them, upon grounds of confidence in the administration. The *first*, who is now one of the greatest and wealthiest noblemen in the kingdom,—an earl, decorated with the order of the *garter*, and distinguished by the personal favour of the regent,—was then the eldest son of a Yorkshire clergyman, rector of Swillington in the same county, of very limited fortune, though of antient descent; and who had been raised to the baronetage, early in the present reign. I mean, the late Rev. Sir William Lowther. His son, a man of very moderate parts, was one of the representatives for the county of Cumberland; a distinction which he owed to the protection of

the Earl of Lonsdale. By *him*, to whom Mr. Lowther was distantly related, he was finally adopted; Lord Lonsdale never having had any issue by his marriage with Lady Mary Stuart, daughter of the celebrated Earl of Bute.

The *second* person who ventured to make the same avowal, Sir Gregory Page Turner, was distinguished by great eccentricities of deportment; such, indeed, as to call into question, on some occasions, the sanity of his mind. I confess, nevertheless, that Fox's and Powis's severe animadversions on the conduct of those individuals, who entrusted their political conscience to ministerial direction, appeared to me unjust, as applied to the subject under debate. Probably, among the four hundred and thirty-six members who finally divided on the question, not thirty-six were competent to form a sound estimate of the utility, or pernicious nature, of *the propositions*. So vast a scope did they embrace, and so difficult was it to adopt any well-matured opinion respecting their consequences to the two countries. Under such circumstances, what other course could a popular assembly pursue, than to follow the authority of men who during successive months had applied their faculties to the object? I am unable, even now, after the lapse of three-and-thirty years, to say whether *the Irish propositions* would, or would not, have been productive of benefit to the two kingdoms. Yet I incline to think that the Irish

nation, though they might have sacrificed their independence on particular points of commercial regulation or legislation, would have received solid compensations of many kinds for any such renunciation. But ignorance pervaded equally the ministerial and the opposition benches, though only two individuals then rose to make the confession. A third member, Humphrey Minchin, one of the representatives for Oakhampton, soon afterwards followed their example. Minchin possessed extensive information, was versed in parliamentary business, and performed a conspicuous part among the opposition leaders. On the 30th of May, he moved to adjourn the consideration of *the Irish propositions* for three months. "Throughout the whole progress of this most important measure," said he, "I have daily attended, and attentively listened to every conversation respecting it. But I have not hitherto voted once; and the reason is,—I am not ashamed to make the avowal;—*it has not been in my power to understand the resolutions.* I am however able to add, that I by no means stand alone in this predicament. *Many men of undoubted abilities, in as well as out of this assembly, are in the same situation. Nay, I believe I may safely assert that the bulk of the people in both countries are in a state of equal ignorance relative to the true scope, import, and above all, the results to be expected from the propositions.*"

Nine-tenths of the house of commons possessed



neither leisure, nor ability, nor inclination to investigate so deep a subject, even had more time been granted for the purpose. And could it be expected that they would nullify their own votes? The demand, however specious, Fox well knew, was destitute of solidity; calculated rather to afford matter for declamation, than for just accusation. Eden, who, upon all questions of commerce or manufactures, occupied among the opposition the same place which Jenkinson filled under administration, terminated this long debate. Vainly, however, did he adjure the minister to postpone, even for a day, the consideration of so momentous a subject; though he reminded Pitt of the precipitation with which the vote respecting *the Westminster scrutiny* had been carried, and of the disgrace that succeeded. "At nearly as late an hour as we are now debating," said Eden, "in the triumph of party, was that ill-fated victory obtained; a measure which, even in the opinion of those who carried it, as well as in the estimation of the public, can never be mentioned except in terms of shame or of indignation." The treasury bench making no reply, the division immediately took place. It fully equalled the ministerial expectations; two hundred and eighty-one members blindly supporting Pitt, while Fox numbered only one hundred and fifty-five, who voted for the adjournment. I believe, during the whole time that I sate in parliament, I never

remained till so late an hour in the house. When I passed the Horse Guards in my way home, the clock pointed to half-past eight. During the discussions respecting Wilkes, in the first years of the present reign, as I have been assured by old members, the debate lasted, on one, if not on more than one occasion, till nine in the morning.

19th May. — The asperity and recrimination which characterized the early stages of *the Irish propositions*, by no means diminished in violence as that measure advanced towards its completion. Burke, after comparing the situation of the British government relative to Ireland, with the position of England and America in 1774; the mother country in both cases attempting, through the medium of parliament, to raise a revenue by legislative regulations; attacked Pitt in a very sensitive part. Observing Jenkinson seated on his right hand, "The chancellor of the exchequer," exclaimed Burke, "mounted aloft on the shoulders of his right honourable friend, seems to set at defiance all argument, and to despise every remonstrance. *I envy not the statue its pedestal, nor the pedestal its statue*: one is well adapted to the other." Fox pursuing the simile, "If," said he, "following the example of the present minister, I had sought, when in office, the species of support illustrated by *the pedestal and the statue*, I should not on the present day be accused of having manifested personal ambition or temerity,



during the time that I occupied a share in the government. But I seek not for such support. My only *pedestal* is the British constitution." Though Jenkinson remained silent under these imputations, with which he was perhaps not wholly dissatisfied, yet Dundas did not allow them to pass unnoticed. While answering Fox, he remarked that the *pedestal* and the *statue* which Burke's fancy had formed, must have been founded in some mistake. "I conceive," added Dundas, "he alluded to the *pedestal* on which the late secretary of state attempted to place himself, and to bury under it the constitution of his country.

We seek only constitutional support. The support to which *he* and his friends trust, *is not so constitutional: but, such as it is, I will not specify it; for it is unfit to be mentioned here.*" The allusion thus made to the Prince of Wales, could not be misunderstood. Pitt, nevertheless, conscious that such an insinuation did not admit of proof, with great ingenuity attempted to give it a more general and undefined application.

"I rise," said he, "to say a few words respecting a subject which, on this evening, has assumed a most poetic and picturesque appearance. I mean, the happy idea of a *statue* and a *pedestal*. After having derived so much advantage from it in *argument*, I hope its inventor will allow us to see it under a different dress; as it seems highly calculated to gratify another *sense*, if decorated with



proper colouring.”—“ With respect to a *constitutional support of a nature unfit or indelicate to mention in this house*, the most constitutional support which I can conceive, is the confidence of the crown, of parliament, and of the nation. But, if a set of men could exist, who having stormed the cabinet, and distributed among themselves the several departments of government, should form a regular system for degrading their royal master to a cypher in the state ;—if they should then endeavour to secure possession of their power by erecting a new and *unconstitutional executive authority* ;—I desire to ask whether the *support* which they seek can, with any sort of regard to parliamentary decorum, be *mentioned in this assembly?*” Having extricated Dundas by so dexterous an explanation of his speech, Pitt proceeded to defend the measure under consideration. Nor did the house desert him, as one hundred and ninety-five members supported administration on the division. Fox could only number ninety. But the party, however outvoted in parliament, took their full revenge in ridicule, wit, and poetry. *The statue and the pedestal* were exhibited under various forms. One of the “ Probationary Odes,” published at this time, thus describes Pitt and Jenkinson.

“ Lo ! hand in hand, advance th’ enamour’d pair ;  
This, Chatham’s son, and that, the drudge of Bute.  
Proud of their mutual love,  
Like Nisus and Euryalus they move ;

To glory's steepest heights together tend,  
Each careless for himself, each anxious for his friend!

Hail! associate politicians!

Hail! sublime arithmeticians!

Hail! vast exhaustless source of Irish *propositions*!"

20th—30th May.—The session was principally, if not solely protracted, by the perilous attempt to frame a commercial union between England and Ireland. Pitt's *fourth proposition*, which stated that "the laws for regulating trade and navigation should be the same in both countries, and binding Ireland to adopt all such regulations as Great Britain should enact," appeared to be subversive of the legislative independence of the former kingdom, though many ingenious reasons were adduced by ministers to prove the contrary. Lord Beauchamp, who took a leading part in the debate which arose on this *proposition*, moved an amendment to it. He occupied no mean place in the ranks of opposition, and spoke, whenever he addressed the house, if not with eloquence, at least with knowledge of the subject. His person, elegantly formed, rose above the ordinary height; and his manners were noble, yet ingratiating. Few individuals in either house of parliament could feel a deeper interest in maintaining and cementing the union of the two countries; he being heir to a vast patrimonial property situate in Ireland. Like most, or all the members of his family, he was accused of loving money; and



before he completed his thirty-fourth year, he had married two of the richest heiresses of high birth to be found in England. The first, who was a daughter of Lord Windsor, could boast of few personal attractions; but the second, besides the gifts of fortune, had received from nature such a degree of beauty as is rarely bestowed upon woman. Lady Beauchamp, in 1785, though even then no longer in her first youth, possessed extraordinary charms. At the present time, in 1818, when she numbers over her head nearly sixty winters, she is still capable of inspiring passion. That she does indeed inspire passion in some sense of the word, must be assumed from the empire which she maintains at this hour over the regent; — an empire depending, however, from the first moment of its origin, more on intellectual and moral endowments, than on corporeal qualities, and reposing principally on admiration or esteem. We may reasonably doubt whether Diana de Poitiers, Ninon de l'Enclos, or Marion de l'Orme, three women who preserved their powers of captivating mankind even in the evening of life, could exhibit at her age finer remains of female grace than the Marchioness of Hertford retains at the present day.—Lord Beauchamp's amendment could only procure thirty-six supporters, while one hundred and ninety-four voted with government. But it was not till the last days of May, that the *resolutions* having finally passed the house of commons,



the Marquis of Graham carried them up to the bar of the peers.

*June.*—Among the members who occupied throughout the session no inconsiderable portion of notice, must be accounted Beaufoy. On all subjects connected with commerce, he displayed a great variety of information, and his intentions were always directed to national benefit. Strongly attached to the administration, he nevertheless preserved his independence of character, and might be esteemed rather a friend, than a follower, of the minister. Few persons appeared so attentive to the aids of dress as Beaufoy, who rarely or never took his seat except attired with more than ordinary care. Indeed, it was commonly said, that whenever he intended to speak on any question, he prepared his figure for the act, not less than his mind; under a conviction that his oratory produced a more favourable impression, and was assisted by external elegance of appearance. His delivery, measured, grave, and sonorous, was as far removed from the precision of Bankes, as from the fluency of Wilberforce. He possessed much command of expression, and even dignity of language; but there was in his manner something theatrical, which diminished the effect of his eloquence. I have been assured that he received lessons of enunciation from old Sheridan, who gave lectures on the study and practice of oratory as a science.

Beaufoy manifested on every occasion the most deeply-rooted prejudices against Lord North, as the conductor of the American war: a circumstance which, when added to his predilection for Pitt, procured him a distinguished niche in the "Rolliad." That production thus describes him.

"Lo! Beaufoy rises, friend to soft repose,  
Whose gentle accents prompt the house to doze.  
His cadence just a general sleep provokes,  
Almost as quickly as *Sir Richard's* jokes.  
Thy slumbers, North, he strives in vain to break;  
When all are sleeping, thou wouldst scarce awake,  
Tho' from his lips severe invectives fell,  
Sharp as the acid he delights to sell."

In order that the allusion contained in the last line might not be mistaken, the "Rolliad" subjoins, "This accomplished orator, although the elegance of his diction, and smoothness of his manner, partake rather of the properties of oil, is, in his commercial capacity, a dealer in vinegar." *Sir Richard* was designed for *Sir Richard Hill*, as *Sir Joseph* always signified *Sir Joseph Mawbey*, throughout the "Rolliad."

Nor was this the only mention made of Beaufoy in the satirical compositions of that period which emanated from Fox's party. In one of the "Political Eclogues," published towards the end of 1786, entitled "Margaret Nicholson," he is introduced. The eclogue in question, (written as a parody on the "Daphnis" of Virgil, where Me-



nalcas and Mopsus contend in alternate verse,) presents Wilkes and Jenkinson congratulating each other on the king's recent escape from assassination. Beaufoy was accustomed sometimes to entertain the cabinet at his house in Great George-street; in allusion to which fact, Jenkinson exclaims,

“ Twice every year, with Beaufoy as we dine,  
Pour'd to the brim—eternal George—be thine  
Two foaming cups of his nectareous juice,  
Which,—new to gods,—no mortal vines produce.”

A circumstance which I witnessed at this period of the session, may serve to shew the thorough information possessed by Beaufoy on matters of trade, and the enormous frauds which were then practised on the revenue. Beaufoy having presented a petition to the house from the dealers in tobacco, praying relief in various matters interesting to themselves, and to the country at large, detailed the mode in which tobacco was smuggled into the kingdom. “ A vessel laden with that article,” said he, “ comes up the Thames to Gravesend, where a custom-house officer rows on board her. As soon as he sets his foot on the deck, he walks to the ladder conducting to the captain's cabin, where he writes in chalk, *Have you any tobacco for me?* The captain no sooner peruses these words, than, after first erasing them, he replies in the same way, *I have. What is your price?* The officer, using a similar previous pre-



caution, answers, *Five guineas a hogshead*; to which the captain (still taking care not to allow the question and the answer to remain at the same time, as a testimony against him of this illicit correspondence,) simply chalks on the ladder, *Agreed*. The bargain being thus concluded, on the ensuing night the ship is got up as far as Limehouse, where barges are held ready for conveying the tobacco on shore. Before the next morning, I am assured that thirty hogsheads are frequently landed, and the revenue consequently defrauded to the amount of two thousand pounds." Beaufoy's recital much amused the house; but Pitt, rising as soon as he had concluded, observed, that "after such an exposition, so interesting to the trade and revenue of the country, late as it was in the session," (I believe it happened on the 10th of June,) "he should think it his duty to move for leave to bring in a *bill* for the future regulation of the trade in tobacco." Within a few days subsequent, he carried his intention into effect.

At this time arrived in London, from the banks of the Ganges, where he had so long occupied the highest place, Governor-general Hastings. He will fill too distinguished a place in these memoirs not to trace the leading features of his character. When he landed in his native country, he had attained his fifty-second year, after having resided during the far greater part of his

memorable life either on the coast of Coromandel or in Bengal. In his person he was thin, but not tall; of a spare habit, very bald, with a countenance placid and thoughtful, but, when animated, full of intelligence. Never perhaps did any man, who passed the Cape of Good Hope, display a mind more elevated above mercenary considerations. Placed in a situation where he might have amassed immense wealth without exciting censure, he revisited England with only a modest competence. Animated by the ambition of maintaining, perhaps of extending, the dominions of the East India Company, he looked down on pecuniary concerns. Mrs. Hastings, who was more attentive to that essential article, brought home about forty thousand pounds, acquired without her husband's privity or approval: but she had the imprudence to place it in the hands of a London merchant, who shortly afterwards proved bankrupt. The *fact*, not the *loss*, chagrined Hastings, when the circumstance became known to him. At this hour, in 1818, he subsists, principally or wholly, on the annuity of four thousand pounds a year conferred on him by the East India Company; driving nearly four miles to church on Sundays in a one-horse chair, and exhibiting no splendour in his domestic establishment. When Major Scott quitted Bengal, the governor-general presented him a bond for ten thousand pounds, intended as a remuneration

for the office of his future agent in England. The bond, bearing interest, when reclaimed by Scott, was paid ; but not without causing inconvenience, or, I might say, pecuniary difficulty, to Hastings.

The only individual related to him by consanguinity, who came out to Bengal while he remained at the head of the government, was a gentleman in the military service of the Company. His name was Gardiner. I believe he never attained beyond the rank of a subaltern ; and he fell in the storming of Fort Gualior by Colonel Popham, about the year 1780. Previous to the attack, Gardiner made his will on a drum-head. It began thus. "Whereas I have the honour of being related to the governor-general ; and whereas I possess no fortune, have incurred many debts, and have besides a mistress with two children ; I hereby bequeath my debts, my affairs, my girl, and my two children, to the protection of Mr. Hastings." The governor-general took the persons thus made over to him under his immediate care, paid the demands, and fulfilled the will. He displayed a magnanimous mind, as much superior to revenge as above the desire of accumulating riches. Lacam, a man whom I well knew, and who planned the formation of a harbour at Saugur, not far from the mouth of the Ganges, was patronized by Hastings. Conceiving the project to be calculated for public utility, he even lent



Lacam a large sum of money for the purpose of carrying it into execution. Nevertheless, when, in 1774, Clavering, Monson, and Francis arrived at Calcutta, Lacam joined them in their hostility to Hastings's measures, regardless of his preceding obligations to the governor-general. The gentleman who related this fact to me added, "I pressed him to compel Lacam to repay the money, after experiencing such proofs of his ingratitude."—"I cannot," replied he. "Why?" was my answer. "Because," rejoined he, "Lacam is my enemy."—"Yet," added the person who communicated to me the anecdote, "I believe, at that time, Hastings was not worth ten thousand pounds."

In private life, he was playful and gay to a degree hardly conceivable, never carrying his political vexations into the bosom of his family. Of a temper so buoyant and elastic, that the instant he quitted the council board, where he had been assailed by every species of opposition, often heightened by personal acrimony; oblivious of these painful occurrences, he mixed in society like a youth on whom care had never intruded. How classic was his mind, how philosophic, how alive to the elegant images and ideas presented to us by antiquity, his imitation of Horace's

*"Otium Divos rogat impotenti"*

may best evince. He composed it on his return home to England, while on board the vessel which

brought him from Bengal. His allusions to Lord Clive, and to Alexander Elliot, the first of whom lived "to hate his envied lot," while the last perished prematurely in the Cuttack country, (a part of the Coromandel coast then little known,) just as his public career commenced;—these two exemplifications of the inanity of all human affairs, and of the misfortunes which pursue us through life in different shapes, are perhaps finer allusions than the Roman poet's

" Abstulit clarum cita mors Achillem;  
Longa Tithonum minuit senectus."

The conclusion, addressed to Lord Teignmouth, then Mr. Shore, admirably delineates his own moderate desires, and objects of noble solicitude.

" For me, O Shore, I only claim  
To merit, not to seek for fame,  
The good and just to please :  
A state above the fear of want,  
Domestic love, Heaven's choicest grant,  
Health, leisure, peace, and ease."

This invocation seems to have been ultimately realized in his person, after surviving not only the impeachment, which met him on setting foot in his native country, but likewise the far greater number of those distinguished individuals who originated and conducted the parliamentary prosecution against him. Yet it may not be unworthy of remark, as a singular fact, that his colleague and opponent Sir Philip Fran-



cis, as well as his successor in the government-general of India, Sir John Macpherson, are both now living, three and thirty years subsequent to the events under our consideration.

I do not mean to defend every political act of Hastings, while placed at the head of our affairs in Bengal. Still less is it my intention to deny that a desire to augment the territories of the East India Company may have impelled him, on some occasions, to advance beyond the limits of a pacific and moderate system of policy. The infraction of the treaty of Poorunder; the severities exercised against the inhabitants of Rohilcund; the treatment of Cheyt Singh, and of various begums or princesses of Indostan;—all these proceedings, if separately considered, as detached from his general administration, furnish matter of historical censure and condemnation. But even these facts derive some justification from the circumstances which produced them, or are far overbalanced by the splendid proofs which he exhibited of firmness, energy, and resources of mind. His situation, from 1775 down to 1782, while Lord North was engaged in the American war, demanded the greatest exertions. From England he could derive only a precarious support. Around him he beheld hostility, aggravated by treachery or incapacity. It was in the beginning of 1778, that, in order to extricate the presidency of Bombay, he planned the adventur-



ous march from the banks of the Jumnah to Surat, across the whole peninsula of India. Goddard executed this bold, wise, and hazardous enterprize, with scarcely seven thousand native troops under his command; traversing hostile, and almost unexplored portions of that continent, for the space of above eight hundred miles, nearly at the same period of time when Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga, and Egerton capitulated at Wargaum to a Mharatta army. Bombay, then an insulated settlement, remote from aid, involved in an unfortunate and disgraceful contest, which had reduced it to the verge of bankruptcy, was relieved by Hastings. In 1781 he extended similar protection to Madras, after the memorable irruption of Hyder Ally, and the defeat sustained by Fletcher and Baillie. How much admiration does his conduct at Benares, during the rebellion of Cheyt Singh, justly excite! Surrounded by enemies, open or concealed; protected only by a few companies of sepoys, whom he was unable to pay, and without the means of obtaining timely support; his courage, calmness, and prudence triumphed over the insurrection. Peace with our Asiatic and European foes ultimately took place. Public credit was preserved; and when Hastings quitted Calcutta, on the 1st of February 1785, universal tranquillity reigned throughout our territories in the East.

That a man who had performed services so

resplendent, should, instead of finding himself decorated with honours on revisiting his native country, meet an impeachment ;—that he should be compared by Burke to Verres, and by Courtenay to Cortez ;—may at first view produce surprise. But, on closer inspection, the causes of such an extraordinary fact become apparent. Hastings had excited numerous, as well as powerful enemies, while resident in India. At their head stood Burke and Fox. The former, though he might be impelled by principle to prosecute a great public culprit,—for such he appeared to Burke,—yet mingled much personal animosity, and many prejudices, with his moral disapprobation. Fox stood pledged to Burke's opinions on almost every point respecting India. Both had, during successive sessions, made Hastings's administration the perpetual subject of their crimination. They could not easily therefore recede ; and Major Scott, the governor-general's avowed agent, with consummate imprudence, incessantly goaded them to bring forward their charges. All the friends of Clavering and of Monson joined them. A far more implacable and able adversary was beheld in the person of Francis ; whose accurate local information upon all matters which had taken place under Hastings's government enabled him to probe every vulnerable part, and to expose every latent error. Such a phalanx, to which Sheridan joined his transcendent talents

and eloquence, was never perhaps drawn out in array against any individual.

Hastings, whose whole life had been passed in Asia, and who very imperfectly knew the ground at St. James's, or in Westminster, ignorantly supposed that his public merits would at least balance, if not obliterate, any acts of severity, or any strong measures to which he might have had recourse, for the purpose, not of enriching himself, but of replenishing the exhausted treasury of Bengal. Other motives of action, besides love of justice, moreover animated the chiefs of opposition in bringing Hastings to the bar of the house of peers. They well knew how favourable an opinion the king entertained of his services, and how graciously he would be received by his sovereign. If Pitt refused to concur in the articles of impeachment, they would have accused him with a base subservience to "the Bengal squad;" with protecting delinquents, and obstructing the progress of a parliamentary prosecution against a criminal of the first magnitude. His concurrence in the prosecution might injure him essentially at court, and deprive him of many supporters in both houses. Nor could Dundas, who, when chairman of "the secret committee" instituted in 1781, had so affirmatively reprobated various acts of the governor-general, now decline to join in impeaching him without exposing himself to the reproach of inconsistency.



The parliamentary history of the present reign offered moreover no slight encouragement to Hastings's enemies. Lord Clive, the *Albuquerque* of the eighteenth century, the conqueror and the founder of our empire on the Ganges; after his return was attacked in the house of commons, and narrowly escaped impeachment. Rodney was pursued with similar violence. On the 14th of May 1781, Burke inveighed against Rodney in language of the utmost asperity, for his treatment of the inhabitants of St. Eustatius. The sufferings of the Jews settled on that island, were held up by Burke to public abhorrence, in terms as forcible as the severities exercised by Hastings on Cheyt Singh, or on the Princesses of Oude. Though defeated by a large majority of nearly two to one, yet he declared his determination of bringing Rodney to a public account; and was only prevented from executing his design by the splendid victory obtained over De Grasse, on the 12th of April 1782. Lord North himself was saved by that victory from impeachment. If the engagement in question had proved as indecisive as Keppel's action of the 27th of July 1778;—and if the combined fleets of France and Spain had consequently prosecuted their expedition against Jamaica, which island, unprotected by a victorious British fleet, could not have made a long or an effectual resistance;—Lord North would infallibly have been sent to the Tower.

The Earl of Sandwich, whom Fox accused of *treachery*, and who was designated by him on the 23rd of January 1782, as "the faithful servant of the King of France, desirous to perform good service to his masters of the house of Bourbon," must have been involved in Lord North's misfortunes or punishment. So must Lord George Germain. I heard Fox and Burke both declare, on the 28th of November 1781, that "he would speedily atone for all his crimes on the public scaffold, a victim to the just vengeance of an undone people." Burke added, "A day of reckoning will soon arrive. Whenever it comes, I shall be ready to impeach the American secretary of state." It may justly be questioned whether Jenkinson would not have been impeached, as the pretended agent of an unconstitutional influence, if affairs had taken a disastrous turn, after Lord North's resignation. Lastly, Lord Melville, in 1806, was, like Hastings, arraigned at the bar of the upper house; and I have been assured, that if the *first* article of his impeachment had been divided into *two* separate charges, instead of being put to the vote as *one*, there would have been a majority against him on *both*. Many peers who did not think him guilty of the *whole* charge collectively, and therefore acquitted him of it, yet would have condemned him on *one* or on the *other* of the allegations. Erskine, who then held the great seal, was believed to be well aware of

this fact ; but to have felt no disposition to punish with severity a native of Scotland, and a member of his own profession. Pitt was already dead ; and the new coalition having got into power, their object was accomplished. In 1785, things were differently disposed. Only four days after Hastings arrived in London, Burke rising for the express purpose, gave notice that “ he would prosecute the enquiry into the governor-general’s administration, and support the charges advanced during his absence. The actual session being too far elapsed to allow of his bringing forward the business before parliament would rise, he must necessarily postpone it till that assembly should be again convoked.”

*July.*—Early in the month of July died the Earl of Portmore, at the advanced age of almost eighty-five. He had been very handsome in his youth, and being a younger son, was commonly known under the reign of George the First by the name of “ Beau Colyear.” I have dined in company with him when nearly fourscore ; and even at that late period of life he retained his activity of body, with many personal graces, and the most polished manners, set off by a green riband. Sir David Colyear, his father, who distinguished himself under William the Third, was raised by that prince to the peerage of Scotland. His mother, the celebrated Catherine Sedley, mistress of James the Second, had been created by



him Countess of Dorchester; but, the patent being only *for life*, the *English* earldom did not descend to her son. I believe there is no instance, since the Restoration, of a similar creation. Indeed, the *right* of creating a peer or peeress *for life*, (or, as it is denominated in France, *a brevet*,) is not, I apprehend, acknowledged to reside in the crown at the present time. Soon after his father's decease, Lord Portmore married, in 1732, Juliana, Duchess Dowager of Leeds. They lived together above half a century, and she survived him more than nine years, dying in 1794, at ninety. When young, she had been a friend of the celebrated Lady Vane; and is mentioned in the memoirs of that extraordinary woman, published by Smollett, in his novel of "Peregrine Pickle." The Duchess of Leeds exhibited in my time a melancholy example of human decrepitude; frightful in her person, wholly deprived of one eye, superannuated, and sinking under infirmities. She outlived her first husband, Peregrine, Duke of Leeds, more than sixty-three years; he having died in May 1731. Her jointure amounted to three thousand pounds per annum; and she consequently drew from the Leeds estate the incredible sum of one hundred and ninety thousand pounds during her widowhood. Lord Portmore's patrimonial property being very small, he sold one thousand pounds of the duchess's jointure, almost immediately after their marriage. The

remaining two thousand pounds a year formed the largest portion of their income.

No part of Pitt's ministerial machinery exposed him to comments so severe, or to ridicule so pointed, as the selection of Arden and Macdonald for the posts of attorney and solicitor general. The master of the rolls, however fiery in his temper, or coarse in his manners, was universally acknowledged to be a lawyer of profound professional knowledge. But Arden's merit seemed to consist principally in the strong predilection manifested towards him by the chancellor of the exchequer. Not that he was destitute of considerable talents: but his person, ignoble; his countenance, which, though it did not absolutely want a nose, (like Sir William Davenant's face,) yet had only a very defective feature of that name; his manner, flip-pant, noisy, and inelegant, excited animadversion. Nor did he compensate for these defects by any superior jurisprudential acquisitions. Unsupported by Pitt's favour, never would Arden have reached the heights of the law. As little would Macdonald have attained that eminence by eloquence, energy of character, or great endowments of mind. His connexions of birth and of alliance, rather than his legal ability, finally made him chief baron of the exchequer. But, less fortunate than Arden, he never could force the doors of the upper house. A baronetcy has formed the termination of his career, and covered his retreat

from public life. It was already evident in 1785, that Scott must outrun every competitor at the bar. Three years afterwards he became solicitor-general; and, perpetually advancing, still holds, in 1821, the great seal of England.

Notwithstanding the late period of the session, a *bill* was brought into the house of commons at this time, for “regulating the duration of polls and *scrutinies* in the election of members of parliament.” I believe the solicitor-general moved for leave to introduce it; but it was drawn up by the attorney-general; its object being to prevent a repetition of the delays which had recently occurred in Covent-garden. Fox opposed it through every stage, as it assumed for its basis the legality of the late *scrutiny*: while Sheridan, Windham, and Eden, assailed the unfortunate attorney-general; pointing out the gross errors, ignorance, or incongruities, which pervaded almost every clause. Courtenay coming forward at the close of the discussion, completed his embarrassment, and oppressed him under the coarsest, most insulting irony. After observing that he could no longer sit silent, from the strong emotions of his sympathy at the sight of a great man in distress, Courtenay remarked the malicious species of warfare carried on against Arden. “The present attack,” said he, “is not made by gentlemen of his own profession, but by individuals who seem, somehow or other, to have



acquired more accurate ideas of law, and of the constitution, than his majesty's attorney-general. I trust, however, that he will not sink into despair, but will consider himself in the situation of Sancho Pança, when he was beat with the shoemaker's last ; Don Quixote having satisfactorily proved to the disconsolate squire, that the meanness of the instrument erased the disgrace of the chastisement."—"The learned gentleman's candour," continued Courtenay, "merits particular praise : for, he ingenuously owns his ignorance of the very statutes on which he founds the necessity for introducing his *bill*. All is fair, liberal, and open in his proceedings ; and unless it had been universally known that he really is the attorney-general, no man could ever have suspected it from the professional ability which he has displayed throughout the present debate." Little or no reply was attempted, either by Arden, or from any individual on the ministerial side of the house, to these sarcasms, which greatly amused the audience, but did not affect the division. Eighty-nine votes supported government. The opposition could only muster forty-four, and Arden's *bill* finally passed with all its defects.

During the whole month of June, the *Irish propositions* made little progress in the upper house. Lord Stormont and Lord Loughborough loudly demanded from ministers some information ; in particular, an explanation of the reasons

which had induced the cabinet to transmute the *eleven propositions* originally laid before the house of commons into *twenty*, as they *now* appeared on the table, altogether distinct in their principle. But scarcely any light could be obtained from the members of administration. Lord Sydney, whose official province it was to dispense it, excused himself from giving details, on account of his apprehension that he might unintentionally let fall some fact or remark which, by misconstruction, would be prejudicial to the two countries. Nor did the chancellor appear disposed to fill up the void left by the secretary of state for the home department. The five remaining cabinet ministers observed a similar line of conduct. Earl Gower rarely indeed mixed in debate; and Lord Howe, except on professional subjects, when he was compelled to rise, never violated his habitual taciturnity. Lord Camden, who subsequently came forward with equal eloquence and knowledge of the subject, either had not as yet qualified himself to take part in the debate, or reserved himself for a future occasion. The Marquis of Carmarthen, ever since he made his memorable attack on Lord Sackville, in February 1782, as if overcome by that effort, seemed hardly to have recovered the use of speech. The Duke of Richmond, indeed, by no means lay under a similar imputation; but, either from inability to comprehend the *propositions*, like Mr. Lowther, Sir Gre-

gory Page Turner, and Mr. Minchin, or disapproving them, I believe he never once opened his lips from the moment of their first introduction till they finally passed. Under these extraordinary circumstances, Lord Carlisle, not without some reason and some wit, remarked, that while seven of his majesty's confidential servants were present, (strange to relate,) not a particle of information could be extracted from them. "I lament," added he, "that the Nile flows not here; and though we have the *septem ostia Nili*, their channels are dried up: far from fertilizing the soil, they dispense no drop of moisture."

8th July.—As the measure advanced, Lord Sydney however found his tongue; and opened the debate, if not in a luminous manner, at least with much more comprehension of the subject than I had ever expected from him. Lord Camden at the same time, like Priam, buckling on his armour, appeared in the front ranks. On the other side, Lord Stormont and Lord Loughborough exposed the injurious, or rather, destructive consequences, which, it was justly to be apprehended, might flow from precipitation. But the feature of that evening's discussion which excited the deepest interest, was the part taken by the Marquis of Lansdown. Since his elevation to the high rank of the peerage, which had been conferred on him towards the close of the preceding year, he had rarely attended in his place,



and scarcely mixed in public life. Withdrawn to his seat of Bowwood in Wiltshire, but always attentive to the progress of events; and having stationed two sentinels in the house of commons, namely, Barré and Alderman Townsend; he remained like a lion couchant, ready, if occasion presented itself, to re-appear at any moment on the stage. Rising when Lord Stormont concluded, he delivered his opinion at very considerable length. Few noblemen possessed a larger stake in the sister kingdom than himself. The tenor of his speech seemed to justify those persons who accused him of systematic insincerity or duplicity: for, while he spoke strongly in favour of *the propositions*, answering Lord Stormont's objections, and urging immediate decision; he at the same time laid a broad ground for impeaching ministers, if, from want of due caution, they should plunge the empire into embarrassment. On comparing the different passages of his discourse, they appeared to be, not the composition of one man, but rather of two individuals animated by opposite intentions or convictions. Nor could it escape observation, in how different a manner he alluded to the Duke of Rutland, then lord-lieutenant of Ireland, from the sarcastic and almost contumelious expressions which he used when mentioning the English chancellor of the exchequer.

"I repose," said Lord Lansdown, "the fullest confidence in the ability of the noble duke who

is placed at the head of affairs in Ireland, as well as in the talents of his secretary. Their *property* constitutes no mean security for their conduct, in a transaction so pregnant with momentous results. With respect to our own ministers, they must be sunk in the most criminal infatuation, if they have not maturely prepared this great system; if they have not ascertained all its bearings and tendencies, and consulted every source of knowledge.”—“I cannot pretend to assert what are the actual dispositions and wishes of the Irish respecting the measure. *I am just from the woods. I have no correspondences;*” but, as far as the information of a common man extends, I consider all delay as most dangerous. If, my lords, this measure is not wise and proper, what other can be substituted for it? We may find fault with the system. *We may say that the author is too young, and is ignorant of the duties that are demanded by his situation. We may conceive that if we were placed in his office, we could do better; and that if another had remained a little longer in his employment, all points depending between England and Ireland would have been adjusted. Perhaps we may exclaim, How, in God’s name, did this man twist himself in to be a minister! But we must take matters as we find them, and deliberate maturely before we come to any decision.*” When we appreciate the spirit which pervaded Lord Lansdown’s speech; the pointed allusion made to Pitt’s want of property, con-

trasted with the ample security afforded to the country in that particular by the lord-lieutenant, and by Mr. Orde; together with the personal reflexions on the mode by which Pitt attained to power;—when we consider these circumstances, it is not possible to doubt of the hostile sentiments by which the marquis was animated towards the minister. He may be said to have exhaled his chagrin by this attack, which only proved the extent of his animosity. Administration, with whom he nevertheless voted, carried the question on that evening by more than two to one, and the house went into a committee on *the propositions*.

18th July.—If the debate of the 8th of July excited great attention from the appearance and speech of Lord Lansdown; the discussion which arose ten days later, in the same assembly, awakened still stronger interest. Lord Sackville, who during near forty years had acted so distinguished, though, under many points of view, so unfortunate a part on the theatre of war, and of state; who, after the business of Minden, and the loss of America, had nevertheless been raised by George the Third to the peerage, as a remuneration for his services; and who, approaching the close of life, had now, with undiminished energies of mind, withdrawn in some degree from politics;—this nobleman, who fills so considerable a space under two reigns, was beheld for the last time engaged in active exertion. From the commence-



ment of *the Irish propositions* as a ministerial measure, he had invariably deprecated and lamented their introduction. Though he did not, like the Marquis of Lansdown, possess any landed property in Ireland; yet, the long residence which during his youth he had made in Dublin, when added to the intimate knowledge which, as secretary, he had acquired under the Duke of Dorset his father, respecting the people, parties, and interests of that country, entitled his opinions to great respect. He had besides recently visited the island, and its capital, in the summer of 1784. Early in the month of June, he left London for Stonelands Park in Sussex; where he remained during the period that *the propositions* were delayed in their passage through the upper house, by the petitions of the manufacturers. But, on a day being fixed for considering *the report* from the committee; when the last favourable opportunity of opposing the measure would, as he well knew, present itself; he determined, though by no means in a state of good health, to attend in his place.

About seventy peers were present on that occasion: but the ministerial defence was conducted almost solely by the chancellor.

Lord Sackville depicted in language of force, but of moderation, the calamitous effects which he foresaw, or believed, would result to both nations from *the propositions*. "The matter is trivial to myself," continued he, "in comparison

with many of your lordships. I can only be interested for posterity. Whatever may be the issue of our deliberations, my own personal concern is small. I am arrived at that period of life when it would ill become me to be deeply affected by any decision of this house. But I see before me many peers to whom the system may be productive of most important consequences. They, I make no doubt, will live to curse the day that gave it birth. I perceive in its aspect incurable jealousies and endless discord. Should a rupture take place between the two countries, though it is not difficult to see which would prevail, yet the result will be alike fatal to both. I implore your lordships to act with caution, and not lightly to come to a vote which admits of no recall." Having endeavoured dispassionately to prove the erroneous or injudicious principles on which the system reposed, he urged the expediency of substituting in its place *a union* of the two kingdoms. Lord Lansdown, when touching on this point, in the course of his speech, a few days earlier, had declared such a measure, however desirable it might be, as presenting almost insurmountable impediments to its completion. On the contrary, Lord Sackville represented it as, if not easy, yet practicable; and productive, whenever it should be effected, of invaluable advantages to both nations. He examined and answered the objections set up to the attempt; nor did he spare the minister,



while engaged in discussing the question. With great perspicuity, he demonstrated how impracticable it would be found to unite the English and Irish people on *commercial* principles in any solid or permanent bond; while he showed that where all their dependance was placed in one and the same *legislature*, every source of suspicion, distrust, and jealousy would be permanently extinguished.

His conclusion was highly impressive. "I look forward, my lords," said he, "to this happy consummation with the utmost anxiety; and shall be rejoiced to see commissioners appointed by his majesty for negotiating so important a work. *It will not probably take place in my time. Nevertheless, I hope that the period when it shall be effected is not very distant.* Happen whenever it may, the event will ensure to both kingdoms inestimable and lasting benefits."—"I trust the present measure may still be suspended, and that we may be impelled to direct our whole attention to that *union*, so desirable by the wise of each country. And if *the resolutions* before us could only be withdrawn, should no other peer in this assembly be found to undertake it, *old as I am, I will move for an address to the king, praying that steps may be taken for accomplishing that union, on which depends the prosperity, not only of England and of Ireland, but of the whole empire.*" If we consider that these words were the last ever pronounced by



Lord Sackville in the house of peers, they may be regarded as almost prophetic ; and assuredly they entitle him to be ranked among the most enlightened British statesmen of the eighteenth century. Pitt, though he either did not then perceive their wisdom, or wanted sufficient magnanimity and expansion of mind to adopt the union recommended by Lord Sackville, in preference to his own rash, as well as ill-digested system ; yet ultimately realized the plan pointed out by that nobleman. Fifteen years did not elapse without his recurring to the expedient which in 1785 he treated with neglect. Nor is it to be accounted among the least singular facts of our own time, that a man who by the sentence of a court-martial had been rendered incapable of serving the crown in a military capacity, and on whom, as a minister, the unpopularity of the American war peculiarly rested, should yet, when in his seventieth year, lay the first stone, as a peer, of the union between Great Britain and Ireland. Lord Sackville may indeed be said, with nearly as much truth, to have exhausted his last breath in the senate, as did the great Earl of Chatham. Both spoke with extraordinary energy, in contradiction to measures which they deprecated as pernicious to their country. Both survived the exertion a very short time ;—the latter nobleman, only a few days ; the former, not six weeks.

Never was any act less dictated by a spirit of

faction than Lord Sackville's conduct on the 18th of July. All his inclinations, as I know, leaned towards government. He had most disinterestedly and firmly supported Pitt in January 1784, when his aid was very essential in both houses of parliament to a young first minister struggling against a powerful majority. Subsequent to that period, he had continued to be animated by the same principles. His majesty had not in his dominions a more loyal, attached, and grateful subject. With more than one member of the existing cabinet he lived on terms of friendship. I allude to the chancellor, and to Lord Sydney. The remark might be extended to Lord Gower. On the contrary, he cultivated no intimacy with any of the adherents of the *coalition*. Some coldness even existed between Lord North and him, on account of the manner in which that nobleman had to a certain degree sacrificed or abandoned him, from the exigency of affairs, during the last weeks of his convulsed and expiring administration. Lord Sackville, in opposing *the Irish propositions*, was only impelled by his conviction of their inexpediency and dangerous tendency; — a conviction founded on local knowledge, and confirmed by reflection. Yet the spirit of party attributed his conduct to personal feelings of ambition or discontent. Satirical prints were exposed to sale in the shops, where he appears haranguing the house of peers, and encouraging them to attack *the Irish*



*propositions*, while Lord Stormont and Lord Derby, in the back-ground, halloo and support him. But his mind was superior to such considerations, at a moment when *he* probably anticipated his departure from all sublunary deliberations, as not remote, however unapparent to common observers. In fact, during the course of the debate, he was so much indisposed as to be compelled more than once to leave the house. I breakfasted with him on the following morning in Pall-Mall, previous to his return to Stonelands, which was my last interview with him, as I set out for Paris soon afterwards, and did not return till he was no more. Nor had I then any suspicion or apprehension of his approaching dissolution, though I remarked that his voice was feeble, and that he did not hold himself as upright as was his custom. There was something more serious and kind than ordinary in his manner of parting with me. Possibly *he* thought, though *I* made no such reflection, that we might not meet again. He had declined in strength for several weeks, owing to the effects of a medicine which he was habituated to take with a view of alleviating the pain occasioned by the disease of the stone. This medicine, a species of lixivium, unquestionably produced the effect intended; but, by corroding the coats of the stomach, it abbreviated, or rather terminated, his life.

19th—25th July.—The *motion* made by Lord Sackville on the 18th of July, to postpone for



four months the consideration of *the Irish propositions*, having been negatived by a great majority; only thirty peers supporting, while eighty-four opposed it; *the resolutions*, when voted, were brought down to the house of commons. One, and only one, discussion took place there on the subject; but no division was attempted. Eden, Fox, and Sheridan recapitulated their former arguments against the measure. On this occasion, Jenkinson coming conspicuously forward, expressed his decided belief that, whatever irritation might be excited against the system at the present moment, yet, as soon as it should be thoroughly understood, there would not be found a man in Ireland, possessing a sound understanding, who could refuse it his assent. Pitt repeated the same opinion, in still stronger terms. Fox was not, however, deterred by these declarations from reiterating all his objections. With great force of reasoning, he demonstrated the contradiction and incongruity of the two systems; one, opened in the Irish house of commons by Mr. Orde; the other, originating here; each opposed to the other, in many of their most important principles. Where, he demanded, was to be found the present necessity for this commercial arrangement between the two countries? Ireland did not require it; and wantonly to bring forward so vast a measure, of which no man could predict or ascertain the consequences, appeared to be in

itself an act of temerity as well as of danger. "If," concluded he, "by the operation of influence and corruption, *the resolutions* can be forced through the Irish *parliament*, yet so violent is the detestation of the Irish *people* towards them, that the nation will unquestionably effect their repeal within a short time."

Previous to the commencement of the debate on the 25th of July, Pitt moved a long address to the crown, highly approving, or rather panegyricizing, the *commercial resolutions* adopted by the house. Sheridan exhausted his talents for ridicule on this panegyric, which he denominated a manifesto, and not an address. "It is," continued he, "an impudent libel on the British and the Irish parliaments, and a libel on the throne."—"That *the resolutions* are unpopular *here*, daily experience must convince. That they are still more unpopular *in Ireland*, I can assert from indisputable authority. The whole transaction, throughout every stage of its progress, has been a trick and a fallacy. It was my intention to have expressed my sentiments in a still more deliberate manner than I have done in this house, and I have only to lament my own want of industry in not composing a commentary on *the propositions*. If I had so done, as I fully intended, I would not have acted in a concealed manner. My name should have been affixed to the performance." To this manly, severe, and eloquent philippic, no



answer was attempted from the treasury bench. Pitt and Jenkinson sate silent; but the address passed without any division. The chancellor of the exchequer, confident in the success of his system, and not doubting of its favourable reception in the Irish parliament, instantly moved for leave to bring in a *bill* for “finally regulating the commercial intercourse between the two kingdoms on permanent and equitable principles, for the mutual benefit of both countries.” Nor did he desist from his determination in compliance with Fox’s remonstrances, who warned him, that by so premature and precipitate an act, he violated the decency due towards the legislature of Ireland, they having as yet no cognizance of *the resolutions*. Pitt nevertheless continuing inflexible, the question was put from the chair, and carried in the affirmative; after which an adjournment took place.

28th July—2nd August. — It might naturally have been supposed that the minister, who, after more than five months of unremitting exertion, had, in defiance of so many impediments, carried his measure triumphantly through the two British houses of parliament, would have well ascertained that he should not meet with a defeat on the other side of the Channel. But the event proved that his expectations rested on a fallacious or insecure foundation. Only ten days after the adjournment at Westminster, when Mr. Orde



opened the system in the Irish house of commons, an opposition of the most determined nature was experienced by government. Grattan,—a name distinguished above all others in the annals of Irish eloquence and Irish patriotism during the course of the eighteenth century,—supported by Flood, Burgh, and many eminent members of that assembly, levelled his severest animadversions on the ministerial *propositions*. Curran, then young, and who has since risen to such celebrity in the sister kingdom, gave shining proof of his talents in support of the same cause. These illustrious orators, who so long “held the bar or senate in their spell,” thundered against Pitt’s system, as subversive of the national dignity and freedom. Not that government wanted advocates of equal ability, at whose head I should place Fitzgibbon, then attorney-general, since created Earl of Clare in Ireland, and raised by Pitt to the British peerage in 1799. But the unpopularity of the measure, which appeared to strike at the legislative independance of Ireland, overcame every effort to sustain it. After a debate, protracted till nine on the ensuing morning, when two hundred and thirty-five members voted, *the propositions* were only carried by *nineteen*. Even that small majority could not be regarded as permanent, and diminished on every division. Under these circumstances, Orde, in whom was vested the executive administration, (for the Duke of Rutland

was only a name,) yielding to the torrent, moved an adjournment. Never was a ministerial defeat more signal! The system of commercial settlement, reared with so much difficulty, dissolved at once, leaving no wreck behind. It was, if possible, more odious among the Irish *people* than in the *parliament*; and the illuminations by which Dublin testified the national exultation, completed the humiliation of the government.

When we dispassionately examine this great plan through the medium of time, we must admit that the conception was grand, the design laudable, and the advantages expected to result from it such as might do honour to the most enlightened or patriotic minister, if he could have realized them for the common welfare of both islands. Nor is it to be doubted that Pitt's motives in originating the measure were elevated, pure, and indicated no vulgar ambition. But, neither can we deny that throughout the whole transaction we recognize much temerity, miscalculation or error, presumption, and inflexibility. These qualities, which generally characterize youth, will find some apology on reflecting that the chancellor of the exchequer had scarcely completed his twenty-sixth year when *the propositions* were sent up to the house of peers. Conquerors have laid waste the earth, and favourites have exercised supreme power, at very early periods of life; but I believe there is no



instance of the first minister of a free country being placed so early on such an eminence. The first Earl of Mansfield, when speaking of Pitt, on another occasion, to which I shall allude in the course of these memoirs, said, "He is not a great minister. He is a great *young* minister."

The same excuse cannot be made for Jenkinson, who acted as the guide of Pitt, and who appears to have participated in his credulous anticipation of the favourable reception which *the propositions* would experience in Ireland. But *his* share of the glory, or the obloquy, was only inferior and subordinate. He was not a member of the cabinet. Nor can we doubt that he had already made his bargain with the first minister, and received, in return for his assistance and support, the promise of a British peerage; though, from prudential considerations, its accomplishment was postponed till the ensuing year. He might even esteem his reward more certain and secure from a discomfited, than from a triumphant, first lord of the treasury. Pitt, if he had carried every point in Ireland with the same facility as in England, might possibly, when solicited to realize Jenkinson's expectations, have replied with *Richard*,

"I am not in the giving vein to-day.—

Thou troublest me. I am not in the vein."

Fox did not hesitate at least to assert in various of his speeches, that Jenkinson's favour was manifested more openly to the minister, in proportion



to, and in consequence of his distress, arising from the difficulties into which he had plunged himself by bringing forward *the propositions*. Dundas possessed so flexible and accommodating a political conscience, that no sacrifice of opinion affected *his nerves*. A man who in 1782 could speak and vote against parliamentary reform; without hesitating in 1783, and in 1785, to support by his voice and his vote, the same measure, moved by the same individual; was necessarily composed of pliant materials. The season of the year, when parliament was not sitting, and when many months must elapse before it would probably be again convoked for business, covered the ministerial defeat sustained in Dublin, which became insensibly obliterated from the public mind. *The Irish propositions*, though they occupied all attention in 1785, seemed to be scarcely remembered in 1786. Fox, it is true, alluded to them in terms of the strongest reprobation, on the first day of the ensuing session; when he advised the chancellor of the exchequer to declare explicitly, his determination never more to revive a measure so odious to the trading interests, manufacturers, and merchants of both kingdoms. But, subsequent to that mention, they sunk into political oblivion.

*August.*—Some days previous to the adjournment of the two houses, I left London for Paris. Since my visit to that capital in the preceding

year, Marie Antoinette had given a second heir to the throne, created Duke of Normandy, afterwards the unfortunate Louis the Seventeenth; if, indeed, he can be properly ranked among the French kings. But this auspicious event, which naturally should have endeared the queen to the nation, did not restore her popularity, and she laboured under great and general prejudices entertained against her. Nor had the finances, conducted by Calonne, assumed a prosperous appearance. The ministry remained unchanged; Vergennes, though only at the head of the foreign department, constituting the master-spring of the administration, as the first Mr. Pitt had done among us, under George the Second. Choiseul, the most vigorous minister whom the French had beheld since the prosperous periods of Louis the Fourteenth's reign, unless we should except the Marshal de Belleisle;—Choiseul, was no more. He expired in retirement, though not in disgrace, some months earlier; passing the close of his life in a splendid but philosophic retreat, worthy of Lucullus, or of Cicero, at his palace of Chanteloup, near Amboise, on the banks of the Loire, in one of the most delicious parts of France. During my stay at Paris, public attention was principally engrossed by the memorable transaction of *the diamond necklace*, in which Madame de la Motte performed so important a part. I happened to be at Versailles on the very day, the 15th of August,



when the Cardinal de Rohan, at the time that he was preparing to celebrate mass in the chapel royal, was arrested by order of the king. Such an event taking place in the person of a member of the Sacred College, an ecclesiastic of the highest birth and greatest connexions; related, through the kings of Navarre, to the sovereign himself, and grand almoner of France; might well excite universal amazement. Since the arrest of Fouquet, superintendant of the finances, by Louis the Fourteenth, in 1661, no similar act of royal authority had been performed: for we cannot justly compare with it the seizure and imprisonment of the Duke du Maine in 1718, by order of the regent Duke of Orleans, as an accomplice in the conspiracy of Prince Cellamare. The Cardinal de Rohan's crime was private and personal, wholly unconnected with the state, though affecting the person and character of the queen.

Prince Louis de Rohan, second brother of the Duke de Montbazon, had attained his fifty-first year when the calamitous adventure in question took place. He was a prelate of elegant manners, unceasingly pursuing pleasure, yet nourishing a restless ambition. His talents, though specious, were not regulated by judgment. Credulous, and easily duped by necessitous or artful individuals, who rendered him subservient to their purposes; his vast revenues, arising from the bishoprick of Strasburgh, the abbey of La Chaise-Dieu in



Auvergne, and other ecclesiastical benefices, laid him open to solicitations of every description. Previous to his attainment of the episcopal dignity, while only coadjutor of Strasburgh, he had been employed in the diplomatic line; and filled the post of ambassador from the court of France, at Vienna, under the reign of Maria Theresa, during a considerable time. After his return home, an ardent thirst of power impelled him to attempt reaching the ministerial situation left vacant by Maurepas. Nor was the expectation altogether chimerical; and we may reasonably doubt whether the Cardinal de Lomenie, who, scarcely five years later, attained it, proved himself more capable of extricating France from her embarrassments, than was the Cardinal de Rohan. But Louis the Sixteenth had imbibed very strong prejudices against him, and the queen held him in still greater aversion. Yet, in defiance of these impediments, his efforts were directed to acquire her favour. He was besides not insensible to her personal charms, and entertained the presumptuous hope of rendering himself acceptable to her. The queen, who at this time had not completed her thirtieth year, possessed great attractions, loved admiration, and was accessible to flattery. Other cardinals had presumed to address their vows to preceding queens of France, — the Cardinal of Lorraine, to Catherine of Medicis; Richelieu, to Mary of Medicis, after the death of Henry

the Fourth; and subsequently to Anne of Austria; Fleury, to the consort of Louis the Fifteenth. Without drawing the slightest inference from the fact injurious to Marie Antoinette's honour, it may be assumed as certain that the cardinal regarded her with predilection, not merely as the arbitress of his political destiny, but as an object of personal attachment.

Among the numerous individuals who then frequented Versailles, with the view of advancing their fortune, was Madame de la Motte Valois. Her descent from Henry the Second, king of France, by one of his mistresses, a Piedmontese lady of noble extraction, named St. Remy, having been accidentally discovered and incontestably proved, she became an object of royal notice. A small pension was bestowed on her; and Mademoiselle de Valois, aided by these propitious circumstances, was soon afterwards married to a gentleman of the name of La Motte, one of the Count de Provence's body guards. His functions retaining him at Versailles, near the person of that prince, she became well known to the Cardinal de Rohan, whose character, inclinations, and foibles, she appears to have studied with no ordinary attention. In 1785, she had nearly passed the limits of youth, and she never possessed beauty; but her total want of moral principle, when added to her poverty and habits of expence, induced her to adopt the most desperate expedients for recruit-

ing her finances. A circumstance which took place about this time facilitated their success. Boëhmer, a German jeweller, well known at the French court, possessing a most costly diamond necklace, valued at near seventy thousand pounds sterling, obtained permission to exhibit it to her majesty ; hoping that she might become the purchaser of so superb an article of female ornament. The queen was not, however, captivated by its splendour, and immediately declined the proposal. Madame de la Motte having received information of the fact, took the resolution of fabricating a letter from the queen to herself, authorizing her to make the purchase. In the letter, that princess was made to express a determination of taking the necklace at a certain indicated price ; under the express reserve, however, that the matter should remain a profound secret, and that Boëhmer would agree to receive his payment by instalments, in notes under her own hand, drawn on her treasurer, at stipulated periods.

Furnished with so specious an authority, Madame de la Motte repaired in person to the cardinal. Having in confidence submitted to him Marie Antoinette's pretended letter, she then expatiated on the invaluable occasion which at length presented itself to him, of acquiring that princess's favour, and conferring on her an indelible obligation. She concluded by urging him to see Boëhmer, and to accelerate by his assurances of the



queen's approbation, (the proof of which fact was before him,) the termination of the affair. Credulous as the cardinal proved himself to be throughout the whole business, and peculiarly open to deception as he was on all points that appeared to facilitate his attainment of the queen's particular regard; he nevertheless refused to embark in it, without previously receiving from her own mouth the requisite authority. Madame de la Motte and her husband, who foresaw the impediment, had already provided against it. There resided at that time in Paris a female of Italian extraction, aged twenty-four, by name Made-moiselle d'Oliva, who performed at one of the theatres. In her figure she bore a considerable degree of resemblance to Marie Antoinette. Her they induced, by a sum of money, to personate the queen; assuring her that it was only a frolic, which could lead to no unpleasant or serious consequences. She consented, received from Madame de la Motte instructions how to conduct herself, and was held in readiness for acting the part assigned her.

All the preparations being thus arranged, Madame de la Motte acquainted the cardinal, that however reluctant her majesty might be to come forward personally on such an occasion, she nevertheless felt the propriety of his eminence's scruples. In order to remove them, and at the same time to give him a proof of her deep sense of his

service in procuring her the necklace, she therefore had resolved on granting him an interview in the gardens of Versailles. But, as a discovery must inevitably bring the whole transaction to the king's knowledge;—a disclosure which she deprecated;—it became indispensable to adopt certain precautions. With that view she had fixed on a shady and retired spot, at a little distance from her own apartments in the palace, near the orangery; to which place, under cover of the evening, she could repair, muffled up in such a manner as to elude notice. Their interview, she added, must necessarily be very short; and she absolutely refused to speak a single word, lest she might be overheard. Instead of verbally authorizing the cardinal to pledge her authority to Boëhmer, it was therefore settled that she should hold in her hand a flower; which, on his approaching her to know her pleasure, she would immediately extend to him, as a mark of her approval.

However much we may wonder that he could acquiesce in so gross a deception, or could consent to take part in such a mysterious, obscure, and hazardous intrigue; yet it cannot be doubted that he became a dupe to the artifices of the unprincipled female who planned the whole scheme of plunder. The delusion thus projected, was carried into effect with complete success. On the evening appointed, Mademoiselle d'Oliva, dressed in such a manner as to personate the

queen, her face concealed, and protected by the shades of approaching night, being stationed at the place agreed on, Madame de la Motte conducted the cardinal to it. As soon as he approached the supposed princess, he entreated to be informed by her majesty, whether it was her desire that the affair confided to Madame de la Motte should be negotiated and concluded by him, as her representative? To this demand the female figure assented, according to the pre-determined arrangement, by extending to him the flower, accompanied with an inclination of her body. The cardinal, delighted with such a reception, was preparing to put himself on one knee, and to kiss her hand; when his conductress, alarmed lest a too near approach might enable him to detect the imposture, interposed, exclaiming that there were persons at a small distance, by whom they would be discovered. In his eagerness to retreat, the cardinal slipping, had nearly measured his length on the ground, and the party broke up with precipitation.

Convinced that he had now received an unquestionable assurance of Marie Antoinette's approbation, and had secured her future favour, with all its important results, by the service which he should render her, the cardinal no longer hesitated to pledge himself to Boëhmer. Having procured from him a deduction of above eight thousand pounds on the price demanded; promis-



sory notes or bills for the remainder, exceeding sixty thousand pounds, drawn and signed in the queen's name, payable at various periods by her treasurer, were delivered to Boëhmer by Madame de la Motte. She then received from him the necklace. Her husband having obtained leave of absence, under pretence of visiting the place of his nativity, Bar-sur-Aube in Champagne, carried off the diamonds, quitted France, and arrived safe in London, where he disposed of some of the finest stones among the jewellers of our metropolis. His wife, trusting to the cardinal's interest, rank, and ecclesiastical dignity, for protection; as well as to conceal so disgraceful a business, whenever it should be discovered; remained at Bar. The unfortunate prelate, placed in a situation not unlike that of *Malvolio* in "Twelfth Night," when he is duped by *Maria*, and supposes himself distinguished by *Olivia*, continued in unsuspecting security at court. But the day on which the first of her majesty's promissory engagements became due (amounting to about seventeen thousand pounds) having elapsed without any notification of payment from her treasurer; Boëhmer expressed some surprize at the circumstance, to a friend who held an office in the queen's household.

When the information was communicated to that princess, her amazement and consternation are not to be adequately depicted in words. So

difficult to believe was the fact, that several days elapsed before her enquiries satisfied her of its reality. As soon, however, as the part which the Cardinal de Rohan had performed in it became fully ascertained, she laid the whole matter before the king. Louis, not less astonished than herself, after consulting with some of his ministers on the steps necessary to be adopted, finally determined to arrest the cardinal. Unquestionably, it would have been wiser if he had drawn a veil over the transaction, and had left the imprudent prelate to the consequences of his own fatuity. He was conducted to the Bastile, invariably maintaining that he had acted throughout the whole business with the purest intentions; always conceiving, however erroneously, that he was authorized by her majesty, and was doing her a pleasure by facilitating her acquisition of the necklace. Madame de la Motte, Mademoiselle d'Oliva, and some other individuals, suspected or accused of being implicated in this enormous robbery, were subsequently conveyed to the same fortress. Among them was a very celebrated adventurer or impostor, Count Cagliostro, who had however, I believe, committed no other crime except the act of casting the Cardinal de Rohan's horoscope. Notwithstanding the palpable ignorance and innocence of the queen relative to every part of the affair, yet such was the malignity of the Parisians, and through so prejudiced a me-

dium were all her actions viewed, that a numerous class of society either believed, or affected to believe, her implicated in the guilt of the whole transaction. I shall have occasion to resume the subject in the course of the year 1786.

Having thus enumerated the leading circumstances connected with the *diamond necklace*, one of the most extraordinary events which took place in any European court during the course of the eighteenth century; I am tempted to recount an adventure in which I was deeply and personally engaged, that may appear almost equally incredible with the story of the Cardinal de Rohan. Its nature and delicacy have hitherto prevented me from divulging it to the world, though nearly half a century has already elapsed since it happened: but I may without impropriety transmit it to posterity. If the tragical recollections connected with Marie Antoinette must ever agitate the human mind; the history which I am about to relate respects a princess whose misfortunes and premature end warmly interested her contemporaries, and will be perused with emotion in future times. I mean, the Queen of Denmark, Caroline Matilda, consort of Christian the Seventh, and sister of George the Third. Her fate bore indeed some analogy to that of Marie Antoinette. Both possessed personal attractions; but no comparison could be made between the Austrian and the English princess. The former had re-



ceived from nature an air of majesty, an elegance of form, and a grace altogether peculiar to herself. Caroline Matilda, though not deficient in manner, affable, and full of condescension, yet possessed only the ordinary accompaniments of youth, set off by a good complexion, pleasing features, and *embonpoint*. Both were accused of gallantries. Both were precipitated from the throne, imprisoned, and subjected to the most severe interrogatories. Here, indeed, the parallel terminates; as the powerful interposition of the British crown, sustained by a British squadron, rescued the Danish queen from undergoing the punishment which the hostile invasion of France only drew down upon the unfortunate consort of Louis the Sixteenth. After premising these facts, I shall commence the recital without further preface.

Returning through Pomerania, in the autumn of the year 1774, from a tour round the Baltic, I passed two days at a country palace of the Duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz, detained by his obliging hospitality. Adolphus Frederic the Fourth, eldest of the four brothers of George the Third's queen, was then about six-and-thirty years of age; unmarried, slender in figure, of an adust complexion, agreeable in his manners; receiving English gentlemen, who occasionally, though rarely, visited his summer retreat, with peculiar attention. I had the honour to dine twice with the

duke, during my short stay in his territories. At table, surrounded by his little court, composed of young and agreeable individuals of both sexes, he amused me by recounting some particulars of the English who had from time to time been his guests. The Earl and Countess of Effingham were among the number. "They were always seated," said he, "opposite each other at dinner; and no sooner was the dessert placed before us, than my lord, ordering his lady to open her mouth, threw *dragées*, (sugar-plumbs,) into it across the table, with surprizing dexterity." The fact, extraordinary as it may appear, was related to me by the duke; and those persons who remember, as I do, the nobleman to whom I allude, will admit the eccentricity of his deportment, dress, and character. He died in the island of Jamaica, where he was sent governor.—On quitting Strelitz, I directed my course to Zell, impelled by a desire to see and to pay my respects to the young Queen of Denmark, who then resided in the castle of that name. I experienced from her majesty the most gracious reception. As I had visited Copenhagen in the spring of the same year, she made various enquiries respecting her two children: I mean, the present reigning King of Denmark, and the Duchess of Holstein-Augustembourg. The queen herself was then only in the twenty-fourth year of her age. Sent, as she was, at sixteen, to a dissolute court, and

married to Christian the Seventh, whose vices rendered him unworthy of her; surrounded by bad examples, and abandoned to her own control, before the empire of reason could operate;—Caroline Matilda had not completed her twenty-first year, when she found herself a prisoner in the castle of Cronsberg. She was not indeed a captive at Zell, where she had a court, and enjoyed apparently personal freedom; but, nevertheless, she could by no means be regarded as a free agent. Her own sister, the hereditary Princess of Brunswick, acted by directions of George the Third as a spy on her conduct; usually coming over to Zell every Wednesday, and returning to Brunswick on the ensuing Saturday. I know the fact from the queen's own mouth. There was in the aspect of the castle of Zell, its towers, moat, drawbridge, long galleries, and Gothic features, all the scenery realizing the descriptions of fortresses where imprisoned princesses were detained in bondage. It was the age of those exhibitions, when I travelled in Germany. At Stettin, while dining with the Prince of Anhalt Dessau, a few days before I arrived at Zell, I had seen the Princess Royal of Prussia, Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel, first wife of the late king, Frederic William the Second, who was there confined for her gallantries. Robert, Duke of Ancaster, then Marquis of Lindsey, a young nobleman of extraordinary eccentricity of charac-



ter, and capable of undertaking any enterprize, however desperate or dangerous, was so touched with her misfortunes and imprisonment, that in 1777 he planned her liberation. And he would certainly have attempted it, if the design had not been discovered and prevented. The Princess of Tour and Taxis, Augusta Elizabeth, was about the same time immured, during many years, in a castle of Wirtemberg, by her brother, the reigning duke of that country.

Often, as I was placed opposite to the Queen Caroline Matilda at table; Sophia of Zell, consort of George the First, from whom she lineally descended, recurred to my recollection. It was, in fact, the same story in the same family, acted over again at the distance of eighty or ninety years. Sophia suffered indeed a much severer and longer captivity, for very problematical offences: but both expired under a dark cloud; and both now repose, side by side, in the great church of Zell, without any monument to commemorate their existence. After a stay of three days in that city, I set out for Hamburgh. Previous to my departure, her majesty desired me, if I should see Mr. Mathias, then the British minister to the Hanse Towns, to enquire of him how soon she might expect the company of French comedians to arrive, who annually visited Zell. On the evening of my arrival in Hamburgh, being invited to supper at the house of

one of the principal burgomasters or senators, I there found myself among a crowd of the Danish nobility of both sexes, who, on account of their adherence to the exiled queen, resided at Altona. Having been disgraced, and compelled to quit Copenhagen, they took refuge in this town, which stands on the territory of Denmark, though only separated from Hamburg by a space of some hundred yards. As I had so recently seen and conversed with that princess, they availed themselves of the occasion to put many questions to me respecting her. I answered them with frankness, not sparing my animadversions on the treatment which she had received from the party by whom she had been dethroned. One gentleman, nearly related to the lady at whose house I was entertained, called on me at the hotel where I lodged, three days afterwards. He had been keeper of the privy purse to Christian the Seventh, during the tour which he made in 1768 to France and England. Our conversation turning on the revolution of January 1772, he gave me a confidential account of all the circumstances which produced and accompanied that tragical event. At the French comedy, on the subsequent evening, where we met, he requested leave to wait on me next morning, in a manner which seemed to indicate that he had some communication to make of importance.

On Saturday, the 1st of October, he renewed

the subject of the exiled queen. Being encouraged by my replies, he ventured, not without some hesitation, to ask me if I should be disposed *to render her service?* As I perfectly comprehended the nature and objects of the question, I instantly answered that I was ready to engage, hand and heart, in her cause. "You are then," said he, "the person whom we want. I am deputed by a body of men, who are desirous and able to replace her on the throne, and to invest her with supreme power during the king's incapacity. We cannot proceed a step without previously ascertaining whether her majesty is willing to return to Copenhagen; and the difficulty of opening any communication with her, beset as she is with spies, is such that we have not hitherto been able to surmount that impediment. Your arrival offers a means to approach her. Will you undertake the commission?" Having reiterated my assurances that he might dispose of my time and all my efforts, in any way or manner which could contribute to effect the object; "I am satisfied," said he, "and will make my report without delay to those by whom I have been sent. Expect to hear further from me."

Two days subsequent to this conversation, he introduced me to the young Baron de Schimmelman, eldest son of the baron of that name, one of the most wealthy and powerful individuals in Denmark. Having brought him to my apart-



ments, and joined our hands, he withdrew, leaving us alone. The baron, with great emotion, then opened to me the motive of his visit, first demanding if we were secure from being either overheard or interrupted. When I had tranquillized him on both particulars, he briefly stated the reasons which impelled him, and the persons with whom he acted, to attempt the restoration of the Queen Caroline Matilda. He protested that no sentiments of private interest or ambition, and still less of revenge, stimulated his conduct. Nor did he disguise the dangers of the enterprize. But the deplorable condition of his country, under a king fallen into a state of total imbecility; the administration of which kingdom was committed, by its rulers, to a ministry without vigour or capacity; demanded, he said, the exertions of every good subject to effect its extrication. He candidly admitted the errors and imprudence which had produced the catastrophe of January 1772; but he added, that adversity had no doubt instructed the young queen. Above all he deplored the rupture of that antient political connexion between Denmark and England, which had followed the severe treatment experienced by a British princess, sister of George the Third.

After thus justifying the principles by which he was actuated, he assured me, that so soon as her majesty should have signified her consent to, and

her co-operation in the measures necessary to be adopted for her restoration, she should receive from the party with whom he was connected the most convincing proofs of their ability to replace her on the throne. "My affairs," concluded he, "call me to Copenhagen, where my presence may be eminently useful to the cause. But I will tomorrow introduce you to the Baron de Bulow, and from him you will receive your instructions." With the last-named nobleman (to whom Monsieur de Schimmelman made me known on the evening following our interview) I settled every part of the plan. Bulow, though a Danish subject, was of Hanoverian extraction, and joined to great caution, calmness as well as ability. He had been master of the horse to the queen, and enjoyed her confidence. No man could be better acquainted with her character, virtues, and defects. "Our first objects," observed he, "are limited to knowing that she is disposed to return to Copenhagen; where, during the king's incapacity, and the minority of her son, she must be invested with supreme authority. It would be attended with too great risk to commit any matters to paper, as you might be intercepted on your road to Zell. We must therefore leave you to draw up a proper letter for her majesty, conformable to our ideas, subsequent to your arrival there. The mode and time of effecting its reception by the queen must likewise be submitted to

your own judgment. But every possible precaution should be adopted to prevent suspicion. In particular, beware of the Princess of Brunswick, who, though sister to the queen, is attached to the interests of the family with which she is allied by marriage. Her husband's aunt, Juliana Maria, Queen Dowager of Denmark, now governs that country, in conjunction with her son Prince Frederic. The only credentials which I can venture to give you, are the impression in wax of a seal: but, the instant that her majesty sees it, she will know that you are come from *me*, and she will lend implicit confidence to all you lay before her. If she consents to co-operate with us, she will of course endeavour to interest her brother in the cause. Without his approbation, if not his aid, we cannot long maintain, though we may effect, a revolution. These points constitute the outline of your instructions: but, in a negotiation of such difficulty, as well as peril, much of the execution must depend on circumstances, and your own discretion."

Having at length in repeated conferences matured all our ideas, and having likewise calculated the time which my mission would require, as well as fixed the day, hour, and place when and where I should meet the baron on my return to Hamburgh, I prepared for my departure. Taking the direct road to Zell, instead of that leading through Bremen, by which I had arrived



at Hamburgh, I reached my destination on the morning of the 9th of October; and learned as soon as I alighted from the carriage, not without concern, that the hereditary Princess of Brunswic was then on a visit to her sister. Having nevertheless written to the Baron de Seckendorf, one of the queen's chamberlains, through whom all presentations were made to her; I acquainted him, that as I was on my return to England by Hanover, I had been charged by Mr. Mathias with a letter for her majesty. I received soon afterwards, as I had anticipated would probably happen, an invitation to dine at court on the same day. No sooner had I accomplished this first object, than I drew up a letter to the queen, in which I briefly but accurately enumerated all the particulars which have been already stated in the present narrative. The *names* of the two principal persons by whom I was deputed to wait on her, and the *credential* entrusted to me, I reserved till I should receive her answer. One very embarrassing circumstance yet remained. The etiquette of the court of Zell was, that all strangers who had the honour of being admitted to the royal table were received by her majesty in her drawing-room, a short time before dinner. When the ladies and gentlemen who composed her household had assembled, the queen repaired thither; the persons present forming a small circle, till dinner was announced. In this circle,

with the eyes of so many individuals directed towards me, among whom, as I knew, would be the Princess of Brunswic, I must of necessity present my letter. Its contents might agitate the queen; perhaps so powerfully, as to excite an emotion in her manner or countenance, capable of betraying the nature of my errand. In order to obviate such a disaster, I adopted therefore the following expedient.

After drawing up my letter, I wrote on a sheet of paper, so placed that she must of necessity cast her eye upon it, before she could peruse any other part of the enclosure, these, or nearly these words. "As the contents of the present letter regard your majesty's highest and dearest interests; and as the slightest indication or suspicion of its nature might prove fatal to its object; it is earnestly entreated that your majesty will be pleased to reserve the perusal till you are alone. It is particularly incumbent to conceal it from her royal highness the Princess of Brunswic, who will be present at its reception." When I had finished all my preparations, I repaired in a sedan chair to the castle, at half-past one, as the queen sate down at two to table. The company, consisting of ten or more persons of both sexes, were already met; and in a few minutes, her majesty, accompanied by her sister, entered the apartment. She advanced with a quick step towards me, and holding out her hand, "I am glad

to see you here again," said she; "I understand that you have a letter for me from Mr. Mathias." "I have, madam," answered I, "which he wished me to deliver to your majesty. I believe it regards the company of comedians who are preparing to arrive here." At the same time I presented it, and the queen instantly withdrew to one of the windows, a few paces distant, in order to peruse it. The Princess of Brunswic then accosted me, asking a variety of questions relative to Hamburg. I contrived to answer them, though my attention was internally directed towards the queen; who, after reading the lines prefixed, hastily put the letter into her pocket. She then rejoined us, — for I was standing out of the circle, engaged in conversation with her sister, — and attempted to mix in the discourse. But her face had become of a scarlet colour, and she manifested so much discomposure, that I felt no little uneasiness lest it should excite remark. Fortunately, at that moment dinner was announced, and we followed the two princesses into the eating-room. The whole transaction did not last more than five or six minutes, from its commencement to its close. The queen and princess were always seated at dinner in two splendid arm-chairs, towards the middle of one of the long sides of the table, separated by a space of nearly two feet from each other. I was placed opposite to them. During the repast her majesty soon recovered her



gaiety and presence of mind, keeping me in continual conversation, as did the princess. But no sooner was the dessert served, than the former pushing back her chair, drew out my letter; and holding it in her lap, read it from beginning to end; raising her head from time to time, uttering a few words, and then resuming her occupation. This act of imprudent curiosity and impatience naturally alarmed me. However, we soon repaired again to the drawing-room, where the royal sisters having taken coffee, while the company stood round, afterwards retired. I returned to the inn, and waited till I should hear from the queen.

Scarcely had night closed in, when the Baron de Seckendorf arrived. "I am sent," said he, "by her majesty, who has been pleased to select me as a person entirely devoted to her service, and whom she has entrusted with the secret of your letter. She enjoins me to assure you that she has perused it with the strongest emotions; that she is fully disposed to believe every word which it contains, and not less ardently impelled by duty, as well as by inclination, to comply with its requisitions. Most willingly would she grant you an audience this very night; but the attempt, while her sister is in the castle, would be attended with too much hazard, if not with certain discovery. She therefore desires you to deliver to me the *credential* which you have brought with

you, and to communicate to me the *names* of the two individuals by whom you have been deputed to address her. She will transmit you, through me, her answer without delay, well knowing how improper it would be to detain you here, and how many suspicions it would occasion." Thus authorized, I without hesitation gave the baron the proofs demanded. On my part I made two requests to her majesty: first, that she would return me the letter which I had addressed to her, in order that by putting it into the Baron de Bulow's hands, he might be satisfied that I had thoroughly comprehended, and faithfully as well as accurately conveyed, the important message confided to me: secondly, that as circumstances precluded me from being admitted to an interview with her, she would send me some *credential*, which, like the impression of Bulow's seal, might testify her full consent and approbation to the project for her restoration. On the following day, Seckendorf brought me an explicit verbal reply on her part to the propositions which I had made; declaring that she was not only ready to co-operate with the Danish nobility in every effort for effecting the object in question, but would, whenever it should be thought advisable, address her brother, his Britannic Majesty, to entreat his powerful support. At the same time he delivered into my hand the impression of a seal, affixed by herself, bearing the initials of her name, Caroline

Matilda, together with a superscription in her own hand-writing; both which testimonials the Baron de Bulow would recognize, whenever they were submitted to his inspection. She added her anxious wishes for my speedy return, using proper precautions to conceal my next arrival at Zell. Lastly, Seckendorf restored to me the letter which I had addressed to the queen.

Having thus accomplished all the practicable objects of my mission, I set out immediately for Hanover. Then taking a cross road through an unfrequented part of the electorate, I arrived on the southern bank of the Elbe, and passed over from Harburg to the city of Hamburg. On the day previously settled with the Baron de Bulow, I went to the place of rendezvous; a public walk in the most populous quarter of the town. I had not been there more than a few minutes, when I perceived him. As soon as he saw me, he turned; and I followed him through a number of streets, till we mounted the ramparts. Having reached a remote bastion, he stopped, embraced me, and demanded news of my success. I minutely recounted every particular, concluding with the *credential* delivered me by Seckendorf from the queen, which I presented him. He instantly knew her superscription, as well as cypher. After a long conversation, we parted; but not till we had fixed on another meeting, at which it was finally determined that I should return a third



time to Zell. "My associates," said Bulow, "to whom I have communicated the results of your late visit, are perfectly satisfied with every part of the negotiation. But, before we can with prudence proceed to effect the projected revolution, it is indispensable that we should receive the approbation, and if possible, the aid, of his Britannic Majesty. We trust that the queen will dispatch you as her agent to England, and will support with all her exertions the application to her brother. Without that co-operation we shall want our best guarantee for the permanence of our success. Our means are fully adequate to produce the change in the government, and to place the queen Caroline Matilda at its head. Besides our numerous and powerful friends in Copenhagen, we have the Viceroy of Norway in our interests, and the two Governors of Gluckstadt and Rendsburg, which cities constitute the keys of Holstein and Sleswic. We want only the name and protection of George the Third, to secure us from every possible re-action."

Feeling strongly the justice of Bulow's opinions, I instantly prepared to set out anew for my former destination. In conformity to his ideas, I sketched the outline of another letter to the queen; but, so ambiguously drawn up as to be wholly unintelligible, in case that any accident should befall me on my journey. Previous to my departure, the baron, whom it deeply imported to know from

my own mouth, after quitting Zell, every circumstance attending my reception, and the part which her majesty would take in facilitating the enterprise, determined, at whatever personal risk, to meet me before I should quit Germany on my way to England. But, as my return a third time to Hamburgh, must have been most imprudent, if not dangerous, we adopted another plan. On the road between that city and Zell, about midway, stood a solitary post-house, called Zahrendorf, in a wood of the same name. No place could be better chosen for our interview, its situation precluding all probability of discovery or interruption. Having therefore calculated the time requisite for my mission with as much accuracy as possible, we fixed on Zahrendorf for our rendezvous; agreeing, that he who arrived first should wait the appearance of the other.

My arrangements being now completed, I commenced my third visit to Zell; but, apprehensive of exciting observation if I should be seen so frequently to take the same road, I made a circuit by the city of Lunenburgh. Arriving in the middle of the night at Zell, on the 24th of October, I gave a French name to the centinel at the gate, describing myself as a merchant. Then proceeding round the walls, I drove, not, as before, to the great inn in the principal street of the place, but to an obscure public-house, situate in the suburb of Hanover, denominated the



“Sand Krug.” The Baron de Seckendorf having gone on the preceding day to Hanover, I dispatched an express to hasten his return. I learned, however, with no small satisfaction, that the Princess of Brunswic was not at Zell; and before I awoke on the ensuing morning, Seckendorf presented himself at my bedside. I delivered him the letter which I had drawn up for the queen, communicating to her the wishes and opinions of the Danish nobility engaged in her cause. Scarcely four hours afterwards, Seckendorf came again to me. “The queen,” said he, “having thoroughly weighed the contents of your dispatch, is determined to see you without delay. Her sister’s absence favours her design. Go instantly to the “Jardin Français,” not distant from hence. In the centre stands a small pavilion. Her majesty, attended only by one lady, who is wholly devoted to her interests, will be there in a very short time. You may then converse unreservedly upon every point.” I followed his directions, and had not been more than ten minutes in the pavilion, when I saw the royal coach drive up to the garden-gate. The queen alighting, sent it away, together with her domestics; but, the weather being fine, she preferred walking, rather than remaining in the pavilion. She then entered on business, having first assured me that she could rely on the fidelity of her attendant; while, as she was entirely ignorant of



the English language, her presence would not interpose any restraint on our conversation.

“I was,” proceeded she, “perfectly prepared for the contents of your letter, and I am ready to comply with every demand made in it. To the king my brother I will write in the most pressing terms, laying before him the plan for my restoration, expressing at the same time my conviction of its solidity; and urging him to contribute towards its success, not only by his consent and approbation, but, if necessary, by extending to it pecuniary assistance. I trust his Britannic Majesty will receive you graciously, and admit you to his presence. But, as there must be intermediate persons to whom the negotiation will necessarily be committed, I shall address letters to two noblemen in London. The first is the Earl of Suffolk, who, besides that he fills the post of secretary for the foreign department, has always shewn me distinguishing marks of attention. He is the only member of the cabinet from whom I have received any such proofs of regard. I have no doubt that he will give you a favourable reception. But I shall likewise write to another individual, who is at this time in England, and warmly devoted to my interests. I mean, the Baron de Lichtenstein, marshal of the court of Hanover. He enjoys not only the king’s personal favour, but is admitted constantly to the private parties at the queen’s house, which afford

him facilities of approaching his majesty, not open to any of the ministers. Nevertheless I shall not disclose the affair, either to Lord Suffolk or to Lichtenstein; simply stating to each that you will wait on them from me, on a matter of consequence; adding, that they may give implicit confidence to every fact which you shall lay before them in my name, and on my behalf. As, however, the composition of my letter to the king demands time and consideration; being likewise well aware of the danger which may arise from your remaining here; I have resolved on not detaining you. My three letters shall be transmitted to England, by the regular Hanoverian courier, in the course of a few days; and on your arrival in London, you will find the ground prepared for your appearance. Assure the Baron de Bulow, when you meet him at Zahrendorf, that I will exert every effort to accelerate the happy conclusion of the enterprize." The queen finished by giving me some secret instructions, in case of my being admitted to an audience of George the Third. She then allowed me to withdraw. Our conversation, which lasted about an hour, impressed me with a strong conviction of her capacity.

Returning to the inn, I prepared for my departure as soon as night should allow me to quit Zell; and I got to Zahrendorf at one in the afternoon on the following day. The Baron de



Bulow was not arrived, and I patiently waited therefore his appearance. About four o'clock he came, wrapped up in a cloak which concealed his person, alone, on a common post-waggon. According to our preconcerted agreement, he enquired if there were any travellers in the post-house; and the master acquainting him that a person was above-stairs, he sent up a compliment, requesting leave to join my company. We remained together till one on the ensuing morning, when he quitted me, and returned to Altona by the same conveyance. I pursued my journey soon after daylight; and from the town of Niënburg, which I reached in twenty-four hours, I wrote by the post, under Seckendorf's cover, to her majesty, informing her of Bulow's satisfaction at the measures adopted by her. I then took the road of Osna-brugh and Munster; continued my route through Cleves, to Nimeguen, and descended the river Maese to Rotterdam. It was not till the 15th of November that I arrived in London.

Next morning, having repaired to Lord Suffolk's residence in Downing-street, his private secretary acquainted me, that his lordship being then confined by a severe fit of the gout, unless my business admitted of communication through a third person, I must defer it till the secretary of state should be able to grant me an interview. I therefore proceeded immediately to the Baron de Lichtenstein's lodgings in Chidleigh-court, Pall-



Mall. He received me with great cordiality. "The Queen of Denmark," said he, "has written to me, and refers me in her letter entirely to *you* for information upon every point; but the king has been pleased to communicate to me her majesty's dispatch to himself, which renders me master of the whole affair. It is one of no slight importance, and will require mature consideration. Meanwhile I will inform his majesty of your arrival. As he permits me to form one of his small evening circle, I enjoy the means of laying before him many matters, and of receiving his orders. Be assured of my zeal in every particular which can affect the honour, or the interests, of the Queen Matilda." At our next meeting, which took place a few days afterwards, he delivered me the king's commands. "His majesty," said Lichtenstein, "having considered the nature and delicacy of the mission entrusted to you, enjoins you not to return to Lord Suffolk. The business must be managed and negotiated exclusively through *me*. Nor will the king admit you to any personal audience; because, though all cordiality has ceased between him and the Danish court or government ever since his sister's arrest, yet, as the relations of peace and amity still subsist between the two crowns, he wishes to retain the power of denying, in case of any unforeseen accident, that he has seen or

received an agent sent for the purpose of effecting her restoration. But it is his majesty's pleasure that you should transmit to him through me a full and minute account, on paper, of the whole transaction. He will then be better enabled to form a judgment on the part which it may become him ultimately to take in it. I shall write to her majesty on the subject, and exhort her to patience. You ought to do the same, both to her and to her friends in Denmark. Time must be allowed for deliberation."

In consequence of Lichtenstein's directions, I drew up a narrative of the business, which he delivered to the king; and I wrote both to Seckendorf and to Bulow, in the spirit that the baron had indicated. Great impatience was nevertheless displayed in the replies made me from Zell, as well as from Altona. Lichtenstein meanwhile continued the negotiation at the queen's house, though with so little apparent progress that I more than once despaired of a successful issue; his majesty expressing an insuperable reluctance to commit himself by any act which, if it became known, could be construed as an infraction of the treaties subsisting between the courts of London and Copenhagen. Towards the middle of January 1775, the affair however assumed a more auspicious aspect; and on the 3rd of the following month, the baron delivered to me, in



Chidleigh-court, a paper containing *four* articles. They were drawn up in French, by the king's permission, and with his sanction.

By the *first*, his majesty declared that the attempt to restore the queen his sister to the throne of Denmark had his approbation and consent; only annexing to it a stipulation, that in case of its successful issue, no act of severity should be exercised against any of the individuals who were actually in possession of power. They were simply to be ordered to retire to their respective palaces, or places of residence. By the *second*, his majesty promised that as soon as the revolution was effected, his minister at Copenhagen should be directed to declare that it had been done with his co-operation. By the *third*, though he refused to make any pecuniary advances for facilitating the enterprize, yet he guaranteed the re-payment of such sums as should necessarily be expended in procuring the Queen Caroline Matilda's return to Denmark. By the *fourth*, he engaged that when the revolution should be completed, he would maintain it, if requisite, by the forces of Great Britain.

This paper the Baron de Lichtenstein signed, and having enclosed it in a cover, sealed the packet with his coat of arms. I was then directed to carry it, first to the queen at Zell, who would instantly recognize his signature and seal. Her majesty was empowered to open and peruse



the articles ; after which they were to be sealed up anew by her, and committed to my care. Finally, I was commissioned to convey them to the Baron de Bulow at Altona.

Having received this deposit, I left London on the same night for Harwich ; landed on the 6th of February at Helvoetsluys ; and pursuing my journey with as little delay as the inclemency of the season admitted, by the straight road to Hanover, I reached Deventer without much impediment. But, here my difficulties commenced. On Sunday morning, the 12th of February, at daybreak, I got to the bank of the little river Dinckel, which there separates Westphalia from the Dutch dominions. In a wretched hut, where men, women, oxen, and pigs were all crowded together, and in which no sustenance was to be procured, I found the royal Hanoverian courier, stopped on his way from England towards the electoral capital. He had been detained above forty hours by the inundation of the Dinckel, which, from a rivulet, had become, in consequence of the late incessant rains, a most formidable flood. He dissuaded me from attempting to cross it ; but, the landlord offering to mount one of the four horses that drew the carriage, and assuring me that the deep part of the river did not exceed twelve or fourteen paces, where the horses must swim, I determined to risk the passage. Every precaution being taken,

we drove off from the inn about noon. I got into the carriage, put my dispatches into my bosom, and we plunged into the stream. The violence of the current had much subsided, in consequence of the suspension of the rain. In less than one minute the danger was over, and we touched the ground. I soon arrived at Bentheim. Nevertheless I was overturned on the same night, not far from the town of Rheine, in the bishopric of Munster, and compelled to return for shelter to that place; but I escaped without injury, though one of the glasses of my carriage was broken by the shock. Still greater obstacles awaited me beyond Osnabrugh, at the river Weser, which was swelled to a prodigious size. The country on every side presented the appearance of a deluge. My carriage being, however, placed in a boat, I passed over in about an hour and a half. After encountering great inconvenience, peril, and delay, I got to Hanover on the 16th of February; and the succeeding night I arrived at Zell. In traversing Europe, from the frontiers of Lapland to Naples, I never underwent any dangers or fatigues which could enter into comparison with those that attended me while carrying my dispatches to Caroline Matilda.

On the ensuing morning I acquainted Seckendorf that I was returned to my concealment at the inn in the suburbs. He received me with



testimonies of joy, and assured me that the queen's impatience to converse with me on the subject of my mission to England would not allow her to postpone it beyond the same afternoon. The Princess of Brunswic being happily absent, left her mistress of her actions. She had in her service a *valet de chambre*, named Mantel, a German, of approved fidelity, to whom was entrusted the commission of conducting me to her. I delivered to the baron the packet confided to my care by Lichtenstein, which he carried to her majesty. According to the directions given me by Seckendorf, I quitted the "Sand Krug" on hearing the castle clock strike the hour of four, wrapped in my great-coat, and walked to the drawbridge. In the great quadrangle I found Mantel. He led me nearly round the castle, through private passages; and opening the door of a room into which he admitted me, he left me alone. It was a spacious apartment, the windows of which commanded a view over the gardens of the castle; and I had scarcely leisure to cast my eye round, when the queen entered without any attendant. My interview with her lasted till near a quarter past six, during all which time we stood in the embrasure of one of the windows. As I had then an opportunity of closely examining her countenance and person, it being broad daylight, I shall add a few words on that subject, though I have elsewhere described her.



Her charms consisted principally in her youth and *embonpoint*. Like the king her brother, she betrayed a hurry in her articulation, when agitated or eager; but which peculiarity rather augmented, than diminished, her attractions. Her manners were very ingratiating; noble, yet calculated to win those who approached her. Indeed, towards me, who was engaged at the hazard of my life in endeavours to replace her on the throne, it was natural that she should express much good-will and condescension. I say, to replace her *on the throne*; because it was not merely the crown *matrimonial*, to which she would have been restored. Christian the Seventh being in a state of hopeless imbecility, it necessarily followed, that if she returned to Denmark, she must have been invested with the supreme authority as *regent* during her son's minority.

The queen began our conversation by lamenting that her brother had not admitted me to an audience, as it might have afforded me the occasion of stating to him facts and circumstances which could never be so well related or impressed by the pen. Nor did she express less concern at his refusing to support her cause, and aid her return to Copenhagen, with immediate pecuniary assistance. She hoped, however, that the other stipulations which I had brought from England might satisfy the party engaged in her interests. With great animation she assured me, that no

sentiment of revenge or enmity towards the Queen dowager, Prince Frederic, or any of the individuals who had arrested and imprisoned her, would ever actuate her conduct. The mention of their names naturally led her to speak of the memorable night, the 15th of January 1772, when she fell a victim to her imprudence and want of precaution. I would have avoided such a topic, for obvious reasons; but she entered on it with so much determination, that I could only listen while she recounted to me all the extraordinary occurrences which befell her; not omitting names and particulars respecting herself, of the most private nature. I am, however, far from meaning that she made any disclosure unbecoming a woman of honour and delicacy. Soon after six, she prepared to leave me, as her absence, she said, might excite enquiry. Mantel then returned, and conducted me to a chamber in a distant part of the castle. There I remained till night closed in; when he led me to a private staircase, by which I descended into the great court, and got back, undiscovered, to my quarters.

Having received from Seckendorf, on the following day, the packet which I had brought over from England, enclosed by the queen in a second cover, and sealed with her cypher, I set off for Hamburgh, the country being still inundated on every side. I reached that city nevertheless on the 21st of February; but, on account

of the precautions necessary to be adopted, Bulow and I did not meet before the 23rd ; when I delivered him the articles, which he perused several times, not without some expression of disappointment. "They must, however," said he, "be transmitted to our friends at Copenhagen with as little delay as possible, and we must wait their reply." At our next interview, having acquainted me with the difficulty which occurred of finding a person to whom such a commission could be safely confided, I offered instantly to undertake it ;—an offer that unquestionably evinced more zeal than prudence. Bulow accepted my proposal ; but, on consulting his associates, they observed, that the re-appearance of an Englishman in the Danish capital, who had visited it scarcely ten months antecedently, and whose stay at Hamburgh must be matter of notoriety, would inevitably expose the whole attempt to danger of discovery. The intention was therefore laid aside ; and another individual, a gentleman whose name was never imparted to me, repaired to Copenhagen, carrying with him a copy of Lichtenstein's paper. I remained at Hamburgh till his return, which took place on the 14th of March, without his experiencing any accident ; and Bulow then imparted to me the sentiments of his friends, respecting the *articles* which I had brought from London.

With the *first*, and the *fourth*, they expressed the utmost satisfaction. Nor did they complain



of the *third*, though they regretted that the king would not contribute, by any *present* donation of money, to facilitate his sister's restoration. But against the *second* article they protested, as only holding out to them a support, of which, when extended, they should no longer stand in need. "We are quite powerful enough," said they, "to *effect* the proposed revolution : but, we may not possess sufficient force to *maintain* it. The king only promises that his minister shall declare the attempt to have been undertaken with his sovereign's co-operation, *after it has been successfully performed*. Now we want the declaration to be made at the time that *it is carrying into execution*. For, when we arrest the queen dowager, her son, and the principal members of the government, all Copenhagen will direct their eyes towards the hotel of the English minister. If he shuts his gates, and takes no part whatever, the ministerial adherents will infer that his master neither knows of, nor participates in the success of the enterprise. They may rally, and resume the ascendant. But if, while we occupy the royal palace, the British diplomatic agent goes openly to court, announces that the whole proceeding has the sanction of his Britannic Majesty, and declares that he will maintain it, all opposition must cease from that instant. It is therefore indispensable to make new exertions in London, for obtaining the acquiescence of the king in our present demand."

There was likewise one other concession which it seemed essential to secure, before they proceeded to strike the blow. And this last point regarded, not the King of England, but the Queen Matilda. Her personal appearance at Copenhagen, as expeditiously as possible, after her adherents should have changed the government, would unquestionably operate powerfully to confirm the new order of things. During the summer months, the queen, who was young and active, might arrive in five days from Zell, in the capital of Denmark, unless very unexpected impediments prevented her from crossing *the Great Belt*, which separates the two islands of Zealand and Funen. It could not admit of a doubt, that her presence must contribute to repress any attempt at overturning the revolution effected in her favour. But would she trust her life a second time among those enemies from whom her brother had with difficulty rescued her ; and that, too, before her friends could be considered as wholly secure from danger of counter-action ? In order to obtain these two assurances, one from his Britannic majesty, the other from the queen, I therefore prepared again to revisit Zell and London. Before however I set out, Bulow drew up a letter addressed to the king, in the names of all the nobility engaged in the undertaking ; demonstrating the expediency, if not the necessity, of authorizing his minister at Copenhagen, to come

forward without delay, at the time when his sister's party should render themselves masters of the government. Bulow wrote likewise to the queen, entreating her to sustain with all her exertions the request made to her brother; and stating the importance of her personally repairing to the scene of action by the quickest mode of conveyance, the instant she should be apprized by them of their success.

Furnished with these credentials, I once more left Hamburgh, on Tuesday the 21st of March, and arrived the ensuing night at Zell; concealing myself, as before, in the suburbs. Anticipating my return as probable, I had settled with Seckendorf the name that I would give in at the gate; by which means the queen, who ordered the list of all travellers to be brought her every morning, became apprized of my approach before I announced it to the baron. She immediately sent Mantel to acquaint me that her sister was then in the castle, and would not return to Brunswick till the ensuing Saturday. Her majesty therefore laid her injunctions on me to keep myself concealed; adding, that as soon as the princess should quit Zell, she would immediately admit me to her presence. Having transmitted to her Bulow's letter, I consequently waited her commands. But, on the subsequent morning, it was determined that I should be introduced into the castle on the same night. As this was my last



interview with that princess, I shall relate minutely the particulars.

I set out before eight, at which hour Mantel engaged to meet me. The weather was most tempestuous, accompanied with rain, and such darkness as rendered it difficult to discern any object. When I got to the drawbridge, no valet appeared; and a few moments afterwards, the guard being relieved, passed close to me. Wrapped in my great-coat, I waited, not without considerable anxiety. At length Mantel arrived. He said not a word, but, covering me all over with his large German cloak, and holding an umbrella over our heads, he led me in silence through the arch, into the area of the castle, from whence he conducted me to the queen's library. There he left me, exhorting me to patience, it being uncertain at what hour her majesty could quit her company. The room was lighted up, and the bookcases opened. In about thirty minutes the queen entered the apartment. She was elegantly dressed in crimson satin, and either had, or impressed me as having, an air of majesty, mingled with condescension, altogether unlike an ordinary woman of condition. Our interview lasted nearly two hours. She assured me that she would write the letter demanded by the Danish nobility, to her brother, before she retired to rest; and would urge in the most pressing terms a compliance with the request made to

him by Bulow in the name of his party. "As to the question which he puts to me," added she, "whether I would be ready to set out for Copenhagen on the first intimation of their success; assure him that I am disposed to share every hazard with my friends, and to quit this place at the shortest notice. But he must remember that I am not mistress of my own actions. I live here under the King of England's protection, in his castle, and in his dominions. I cannot leave Zell without his consent and approbation. To obtain that permission, shall form one of the principal objects of my letter to him." She then mentioned to me, for the first time, a circumstance which gave her much concern, as she apprehended it might retard, or wholly impede, the success of my negotiation in London. "The Baron de Lichtenstein," said the queen, "informs me that he is about to quit England, on his return to Hanover. I fear he may be gone before you arrive. His absence must be injurious to my interests; as, besides his attachment to me, his access to the king gave him opportunities of aiding my cause, which no other individual enjoys, or can supply. I shall nevertheless write to him; and he has promised me, that in case of his departure before you reach London, he will take care to leave instructions for regulating your conduct."

These material points being settled, our conver-

sation took a wider range; and as her majesty manifested no disposition to terminate it, we remained together till near eleven, when I ventured to ask her if it was her pleasure that I should retire. She acquiesced, having first enjoined me to keep her constantly, as well as minutely informed, upon every occurrence that arose; though she hoped that my absence would be of short duration. When ready to leave me, she opened the door, but retained it a minute in her hand, as if willing to protract her stay. She never perhaps looked more engaging than on that night, in that attitude, and in that dress. Her countenance, animated with the prospect of her approaching emancipation from Zell, (which was in fact only a refuge and an exile,) and anticipating her restoration to the throne of Denmark, was lighted up with smiles; and she appeared to be in the highest health. Yet, if futurity could have been unveiled to us, we should have seen behind the door which she held in her hand, the "fell anatomy," as *Constance* calls him, already raising his dart to strike her. Within seven weeks from that day she yielded her last breath. As soon as the queen left me, Mantel came again, and wrapping me up as before, conducted me out of the castle; after which he led me by unfrequented ways back to my obscure inn. The darkness and the weather greatly favoured me. Next day, I received from Seckendorf her majesty's letter for



the king her brother. Having completed every object of my mission, after writing to the Baron de Bulow, and acquainting him with all the particulars of my interview with the queen, I began my journey to England. Westphalia no longer presented the same impediments. Taking the direct road through Holland, and travelling with expedition, I reached Helvoetsluys on the 1st day of April. Embarking immediately, though I was forty-eight hours on my passage, I got to London on the 5th of that month, 1775.

My earliest visit was paid to Chidleigh-court, Pall-Mall; but the Baron de Lichtenstein had already quitted England, on his way to Hanover: an event which might justly be regarded as most unpropitious to the speedy success of the enterprize. He had, however, left a letter for me, in which, while he expressed his regret at the necessity of his departure, he acquainted me that it was his majesty's pleasure I should deliver my dispatches to Monsieur Hinuber, *chargé d'affaires d'Hanovre*, who would immediately convey them to the queen's house. Hinuber, on whom I waited at his residence in Jermyn-street, confirmed this information; adding, that he had received the king's commands to enclose whatever packets I might bring, in a box; to seal it up, and to carry it immediately to him. Charged as I was, not only with a letter from Zell, but likewise with another from Altona; and thus acting under

a double commission of the most serious description ; I should perhaps have been justified in declining to obey the royal orders,—at least, as far as regarded the dispatch entrusted to me by the Baron de Bulow. I complied nevertheless with the requisition, and gave up both my pacquets to Hinuber : but I accompanied them with a letter which I addressed to his majesty, acquainting him that as I was the depositary of many very important facts confided to me by his sister, and by Bulow, which were not of a nature to be committed to paper, I ventured to hope that he would admit me to an audience, in whatever way or manner might be most agreeable to him. I did not, however, indulge any sanguine expectations of success in my application : first, because I well knew that the king had laid it down as a principle, to reserve to himself the power of denying that he had ever seen or received an agent from the Queen Matilda ; and secondly, because Lichtenstein, in the letter which he left to direct my conduct, had expressly prepared me for this refusal. “ I must,” said he, “ warn you not to be surprized if *you* do not receive from *him* (George the Third) an answer. It will be addressed to *me*, at Hanover. Reasons with which you are well acquainted,—namely, that *he will give nothing under his hand touching this affair*, — allow of no other line of conduct.”

Being thus situated, I waited till the 21st of

April, when Hinuber having informed me that he had not received any orders from his majesty respecting me, I wrote to the queen, to Seckendorf, and to Bulow. In my letters I detailed every fact here related, requesting to know from the last-mentioned nobleman whether he and his friends would wish me to return to Germany; or to remain in London, and renew my applications through Hinuber to the king. His reply, dated the 2nd of May, reached me on the 10th of that month. It stated that every preparation for the projected enterprize was advancing; that he lamented the silence hitherto observed towards me; but that he besought me, in the names of all the party, to remain where I was, and wait for his next dispatch. On Friday, the 19th of May, as I was entering my lodgings in Jermyn-street, my servant, who daily expected me to set out again for Germany, asked me whether I had heard "that the queen was dead?" Conceiving him to mean our own queen, I replied in the negative; but he soon undeceived me, by explaining that he spoke of Caroline Matilda. The intelligence was fully confirmed to me a few minutes afterwards; with the additional information, that the king her brother having received the account by a messenger sent from Zell, while he was on horseback, had manifested strong marks of concern, and returned instantly to the queen's house. It was not till the 25th of May that the post



brought me a letter from Seckendorf, conveying the lamentable particulars of the same event. He subjoined a fact of no ordinary interest : that his majesty *had* returned an answer to his sister's letter brought over by me. It was sent by the Hanoverian courier, under cover to Lichtenstein, as that nobleman warned me would happen. He forwarded it without delay to her majesty ; but she being then at the last extremity, it was never opened, and Lichtenstein transmitted it, with the seal unbroken, back to George the Third. Its contents have ever remained unknown. I cannot venture to hazard any decided conjecture on the subject, though I incline to believe that the reply was favourable. At length, on the 1st day of June, I received a letter from Bulow. Despair and consternation characterized every line. But, like Seckendorf's, it contained a circumstance highly interesting : namely, that at the very moment when the catastrophe was announced to him from Zell, he and the young Baron de Schimmelman were actually occupied in fixing the time, manner, and every particular requisite for carrying into prompt execution the projected plan, notwithstanding his Britannic Majesty's silence.

Thus abruptly and unexpectedly terminated an enterprize which, as far as human foresight can enable us to predict, must have been crowned with success ; and which, if successful, must have

effected an important change in the political aspect of the North of Europe. That it would not have been disgraced and polluted with any of those sanguinary acts which characterized the revolution of January 1772, I may confidently assert. The express stipulation of George the Third, and the placable character of the queen his sister, form guarantees upon that point. That it would have been consummated without difficulty, and almost without resistance, cannot admit of a doubt. In the spring of 1784, the same attempt, made by the same individuals, or their survivors, was carried into complete effect, without bloodshed; and the young prince royal, then only sixteen years of age, was invested with the powers of regent, as his mother would have been in 1775. That the restoration of Caroline Matilda must have produced most beneficial public consequences to Denmark, by reviving the antient, hereditary, natural connexion between that country and England, is incontestable. Juliana Maria, the queen dowager, and her son, Prince Frederic, possessed neither capacity nor vigour; and they had lost the friendship of Great Britain. Caroline Matilda united considerable energy of character with firmness, and she wanted not judgment. But, youth, power, flattery, and inexperience, had overturned her. Those persons who severely condemn her conduct while in Denmark, forget that she was married at sixteen to a most imbecile, dis-

solute prince; and precipitated from the throne at the age of twenty years and six months. I pretend not to justify her conduct with respect to Struensee, either in a prudential or in a moral point of view. For, though I honoured the queen, I honour truth far above all queens; and whatever faults are found in these memoirs, the violation or suppression of truth never will be among the number. But we must not measure sovereigns precisely by the same principles which apply to individuals. Catherine the Second is tried by her reign, not by her life; by her administration, more than by her private deportment as a woman. Caroline Matilda, though she did not, like Catherine, exercise the sovereign authority, may claim from posterity hardly less indulgence.

Even the modern history of Denmark, including the events that took place during the late revolutionary war,—and consequently, the destiny of Europe,—has been affected by the consequences that flowed from the imprisonment and exile of Caroline Matilda, followed by her premature death. For her brother, George the Third, imbibed so rooted a dislike to the Danish royal family and alliance, that he never would listen to any proposition for renewing the connexion by marriage with the house of Oldenburg. I know that the present king, Frederic the Sixth, when prince regent, made, between 1787 and 1789, repeated efforts to obtain the hand of an English



princess, leaving the selection to his Britannic Majesty in a great degree. Conversing on this subject, in March 1791, with Hugh Elliott, who was then in London on leave of absence, but who filled the post of envoy from Great Britain at the court of Copenhagen; he assured me that he had *twice* proposed, by desire of the prince, his union with a daughter of England: but the king instantly rejected the overture. The heir of the Danish monarchy, thus refused, espoused, in July 1790, the eldest daughter of Prince Charles of Hesse Cassel, by whom he has no male issue. Contrary to the true policy of Denmark, we find him joining with France at every period of his administration. Napoleon had not among his vassal kings a more determined ally; and that formidable chieftain, when, in 1806 and the following year, he planned the invasion of this country, relied with good reason on the navy of Christian the Seventh, "to transport," as he threatened, "the vengeance of the Continent to our shores." Hence, we may assume, took place the sanguinary naval engagement of Copenhagen, in 1801. "*Hoc fonte derivata clades.*" Hence, too, originated the siege and surrender of Copenhagen in 1807. Hence the loss of Norway in 1814; a kingdom which during successive centuries had been united to Denmark, but which is now transferred to the dominion of her antient enemy; governed by one of Bonaparte's lieutenants, who occupies the

throne of Gustavus Adolphus. Such are the extraordinary facts which we have witnessed in our time : facts, indirectly to be traced up to Caroline Matilda's death. Had she been restored to Denmark, and filled the situation of regent during her son's minority, we can scarcely suppose that her brother would have refused to cement the alliance between the two crowns, by giving one of his daughters in marriage to the present king. Norway might at this hour have remained subject to him, and the Danish capital would never have been attacked or entered by an English army.

I shall subjoin a few words, personal to myself, respecting the Queen of Denmark. After her decease, Bulow, as representing the party which had been engaged in her cause ; and Seckendorf, who having carried on the intercourse between her majesty and me, witnessed my exertions in her service ; joined in making to the Baron de Lichtenstein the most pressing solicitations in my behalf. They entreated of him to recommend me to his Britannic Majesty, for remuneration or employment ; and they did it in language so earnest, that even if Lichtenstein had not been of himself disposed to comply, he could not have evaded or refused to gratify their wishes. He was however, I have reason to believe, most desirous of obtaining for me some recompense. In fact, during the years 1775 and 1776, he wrote,

(as he assured me under his hand,) repeatedly to the king, in terms as strong as a Hanoverian subject could venture to use when addressing his sovereign. But no reply was given. I made likewise, myself, two applications in the course of those years to the king, which were delivered to him by persons of rank, or of consideration, who had means of access to his private hours. I may now name them. They were Viscount Barrington and Dr. William Hunter. He still observed, nevertheless, the same silence; and the whole transaction had long ceased to occupy my thoughts, when, in the last days of February 1781, nearly six years subsequent to the demise of Caroline Matilda, it most unexpectedly revived. In 1780, I came into parliament; and some months afterwards, as I was seated nearly behind Lord North in the house of commons, only a few members being present, and no important business in agitation, he suddenly turned round to me. Speaking in a low tone of voice, so as not to be overheard, "Mr. Wraxall," said he, "I have received his majesty's commands to see and talk to you. He informs me that you rendered very important services to the late Queen of Denmark, of which he has related to me the particulars. He is desirous of acknowledging them. We must have some conversation together on the subject. Can you come to me to Bushy Park, dine, and pass the day?" I waited on him there, in June 1781,



and was received by him in his cabinet alone. Having most patiently heard my account of the enterprize in which I engaged for the Queen Matilda's restoration, he asked me what remuneration I demanded? I answered, one thousand guineas, as a compensation for the expence which I had incurred in her majesty's service, and an employment. He assured me that I should have both. Robinson, then secretary to the treasury, paid me the money soon afterwards; and I confidently believe that Lord North would have fulfilled his promise of employing me, or rather of giving me a place of considerable emolument, if his administration had not terminated early in the following year 1782. I now return from this long digression, to the state of public affairs.

On my landing at Dover from Paris, I received the intelligence of Lord Sackville's death. I lost in him a zealous friend. He would have appointed me under-secretary of state in July 1781, when a vacancy took place in his office; but Mr. Knox, who principally conducted the business of that department, opposed my appointment. He said, not without some reason, that "he could no longer perform the duties of his employment, if his colleague occupied a seat in parliament, as the necessary attendance *there* must leave the whole weight and drudgery upon *him*." In 1784, Lord Sackville brought me into the house of commons, leaving me equally free in my parliamentary capa-

city, as he did his own son-in-law Mr. Herbert, and Mr. Medley, the two members for East Grinstead. His correspondence, which I enjoyed down to the close of his life, exhibits in every letter the acuteness of his intellect, the elevation of his mind, and the playful vivacity of his temper, unsubdued by age. Nor does it less forcibly display that strong attachment to the king, cemented by recent marks of his favour, which always characterized Lord Sackville.

Writing to me from his seat at Drayton, on the 27th of December 1783; one of the most critical moments which occurred during the long reign of his present majesty, only eight days after Pitt had been placed at the head of the treasury, and when the *coalition* were masters of the house of commons; he says, “ Mr. Fox acts with much wisdom and parliamentary address, in making his party dip as deep as possible in opposition before the adjournment. Every *resolution* that can embarrass and distress ministry, are so many securities given by his followers to him of their steadiness and attachment. The individuals who may wish to join those in power, will not feel it an easy task to shake off their shackles. The ministers should first attack those who have not attended; and if they can get a sufficient number at the next meeting of the house even to face the enemy, they may struggle through the session. But, I own, their success appears to

me so doubtful, that those who consider only their own interest should be cautious how they engage in the present system. My earnest desire of shewing every possible mark of duty and gratitude to the king, would have induced me to have risked everything in support of his wishes, if personal injuries had not rendered it impracticable. And if he will promote a man to be secretary of state without experience or abilities, how can he expect that such a servant will be acceptable to the public?" Lord Sackville's comments on the nomination of the Marquis of Carmarthen to the foreign department, may appear severe, or may seem to have originated in private resentment. No doubt he retained a deep recollection of that nobleman's conduct in February 1782. But, if we consider that Lord Carmarthen filled the employment which Lord Grenville, Fox, Earl Grey, Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Castlereagh, and Canning, have since successively occupied; and if we compare the extent of the marquis's endowments or eloquence, with the talents possessed by any one of those distinguished individuals, we shall probably incline to think that the extraordinary circumstances of the time, when the continuance of the new administration in office appeared to be most precarious, rather than any real aptitude for the duties of such a station, elevated to it the Marquis of Carmarthen.

I have already mentioned in the "Memoirs of



my own Time," published in 1815, the journey to Drayton which, at Mr. Pitt's desire, I undertook on the 31st of December 1783, in order to induce Lord Sackville to support the new administration, together with its successful result. In the first letter which I received from him after my return to London, dated Drayton, Saturday, the 10th January 1784, he says, " It is impossible to argue upon the event of Monday, as so much depends upon the secret manœuvres of Robinson. If the majorities are not great against Mr. Pitt, he will prevail at last; for then the king's firmness will be shewn, and when understood, will have great weight. If I can form any judgment of my late master, he will give the fairest and most decided support to any ministers of his own chusing. And if they do not abandon *him*, he never will forsake *them*." Among the peculiar features of Lord Sackville's intellectual formation, was a quickness of perception, which seemed at times to partake of prescience and intuition. Being likewise destitute of all reserve where secrecy was not demanded, he rarely declined answering any question put to him; and he was a stranger to circumlocution or evasion. In February 1784, when Pitt's eventual stability in office began to be evident, and his final triumph over the *coalition* almost certain, Lord Walsingham and I asked Lord Sackville, " How long will Pitt remain first minister?" He looked up for two or three se-

conds, and then replied "Five years." The accomplishment of this prediction, or rather opinion, proved ridiculously accurate; for, in February 1789, Pitt in fact was *out*; and only the folly of his opponents, by furnishing him from week to week with new subjects of delay, had allowed time for the king's recovery from his great malady. Nor did Lord Sackville possess less candour than he manifested acuteness. The "*Rolliad*" did not spare him, among the individuals selected for satire or ridicule by the authors of that production. Addressing me from Drayton, on the 2nd of January 1785, he observes, "The '*Rolliad*' is indeed highly entertaining. We all admire it; and there is more wit, elegance, and humour in the composition, than I could have conceived it possible even for Mr. Sheridan and his friends to have produced. Lord Walsingham has no reason to thank them for making him spring from so poor a stock." This remark applied to the lines, in which, alluding to the members of *Fox's* East India Board, who are contrasted with those of Pitt's nomination, the "*Rolliad*" says,

"Whate'er experience Gregory might boast,  
Say, is not Walsingham himself a host?  
His grateful countrymen, with joyful eyes,  
From Sackville's ashes see this phoenix rise.  
Perhaps with all his *master's* talents blest,  
To save the East, as *he* subdued the West."

Lord Sackville, though not a man of letters, nor even inclined to literary pursuits, yet seemed to inherit his grandfather Charles Earl of Dorset's partiality for talents. As Hobbes wrote under the protection of the Earls of Devonshire, at Chatsworth and at Hardwick; so Cumberland composed various of his dramatic pieces under that nobleman's roof, either at Stonelands or at Drayton. I have myself assisted several times at the reading of his tragedies or comedies. "Cumberland," says Lord Sackville, in a letter addressed to me from Drayton, 26th October 1782, "is writing a new sort of tragedy in familiar dialogue, instead of blank verse; for which, I conclude, he will be abused till he has a severe fit of the bile. Four acts are finished. The ladies have attended the reading of them, and say they are very moving. I declined the pleasure, because I fear I never can commend any performance equal to the expectation of the author. Such prose as you write, I admire, because I understand it; but I have not genius sufficient for works of mere imagination." Near two years afterwards, on the 21st of October 1784, addressing me from the same place, he says, "Cumberland is writing; and indeed has finished a new comedy; and I have seen it; and the dialogue is remarkably well. There was something in the characters, in the moral part of them, that I disliked; and I was in doubt whether I might venture to declare it.



But, as I cannot forbear speaking truth, out it came; and instead of being offended, he adopted the idea; and it is all to be altered according to my plan. Was I not a bold man to attack an author?" On the 2nd of January 1785, he again writes me: "When Cumberland read his comedy here, the character of *Dumps*, which you commend, struck me as the least to be admired: but we said so much upon that subject, that he promised to alter it."—"As I see '*The Natural Son*' advertized for the remainder of the week, I am in hopes that the managers expect it will answer." These passages of his correspondence with me, all written soon after his resignation of office, and when he was fast approaching his seventieth year, display the elasticity of his mind; while they as forcibly prove how little either the advance of age, or the loss of employment, had indisposed him for the tranquil pleasures of private life.

The last letter that I ever received from Lord Sackville is dated "Stonelands Lodge, 17th of July 1785," the day preceding his memorable speech in the house of peers, which terminated his public career. He was preparing for his journey to London when he wrote it; and he speaks in terms of the severest condemnation respecting Pitt's and Jenkinson's measure of the *Irish propositions*. "If we may believe," says he, "the newspapers, the factious part of Ireland wish to reject

these very advantageous propositions, because they only administer a *slow* poison to us. The first dose, prepared by the Doctors Foster and Beresford, would have had an *instant* effect; and it is hard that they will not consent to reprieve us for a few years, that such old fellows as I am may not attend the execution. Mr. Pitt is young enough to live to see, and, I hope, to repent of what his influence is imposing upon this great and flourishing country." There was not, probably, a nobleman in England who combined a more liberal economy with a hospitable and splendid establishment. He maintained three separate households: one in Pall-Mall; another at Stonelands in Sussex,—a family seat to which he was partial, where he had passed much of his youth, and which he rented of his nephew, the Duke of Dorset. He kept up a third, at his magnificent place of Drayton in the county of Northampton. His table was admirably served, and his house never wanted a select company of both sexes. Yet his income did not exceed nine or ten thousand pounds a year; and when he went out of office, he made no reduction whatever in his household, nor dismissed a single domestic. With *him* may justly be said to have become eclipsed the name of Sackville, as a parliamentary beacon. The Duke of Dorset, his nephew, was only a pleasing, accomplished individual of very high rank, made for the ornament of a court; formed to grace a

drawing-room, but destitute of talents for state affairs. He filled however during six years, without reproach, the post of ambassador to the court of Versailles. His only son perished at twenty-one, in an Irish fox-chace: a mode of dying not the most glorious or distinguished, though two sons of William the Conqueror, one of whom was a king of England, terminated their lives in a similar occupation.

The present Duke of Dorset, and his brother Mr. Germain, Lord Sackville's two sons, men by no means wanting talents, have nevertheless hitherto remained in a sort of political obscurity; better known at Newmarket, or on Ascot Heath, than at Westminster; on the turf, or at the cockpit, than in parliament. Even the dukedom itself seems to be already deprived of its greatest ornament, and to be half extinguished by the loss of Knole; a mansion which was to the Sackvilles all which Blenheim is to the Churchills, or Penshurst to the Sydneys; recalling a thousand images of past times and transactions. That venerable pile, where the Earls and Dukes of Dorset had resided in uninterrupted succession more than two centuries; — a species of classic ground, enriched with portraits of so many illustrious persons, and so many historical monuments; — it is highly probable will be transferred to the Earls of Delawar, in consequence of a will, which, whatever legal validity it may possess, militates



against every feeling of justice or propriety. The very name of Sackville appears to be near extinction, as far as appearances warrant us to assume; the present Duke of Dorset being unmarried, and Mr. Germain without male issue, though both have long passed the zenith of life. It is nevertheless a name, than which few, if any, more resplendent is to be found in our annals; raised to the peerage by Elizabeth, in the person of Lord Treasurer Buckhurst; created earls by James the First, and dukes by George the First; fertile in men distinguished for loyalty, courage, and protection of genius. In pronouncing the name of Charles, Earl of Dorset, whom his contemporaries compared with Tibullus, Mæcenas, Gallus, and Petronius, we see pass in review before us the shades of Waller, Dryden, Otway, Wycherley, Butler, Prior, and many other poets or men of eminent talents, foreigners as well as English, who shared the society and the bounty of that celebrated individual. Lord Sackville had not degenerated from him. Though Minden and America exposed him to popular clamour, yet posterity, I am persuaded, viewing him dispassionately, will rank him among the most eminent persons who performed a part on the great theatre of public life during the reigns of George the Second and of his present majesty.

About this time, a person was appointed secretary of legation to the British envoy at Berlin,

who displayed such eminent talents for negotiation, and acted so distinguished a part in the diplomatic line, during the short period of his public service, as to deserve that I should enter into some details respecting him. The individual to whom I allude, Mr. Joseph Ewart, was the son of a Scottish clergyman at Dumfries, and brought up to the profession of surgery. With a view of improving himself, and at the same time of visiting the Continent, he accompanied one of his countrymen, Mr. Macdonald of Clanronald, in the year 1782, from England to Vienna. A quarrel arising between them while resident in the Austrian capital, Ewart quitted him; and our minister at that court, Sir Robert Murray Keith, being in want of a secretary at the time, Ewart assisted him as such, but without being officially attached to the mission. About two years afterwards, in 1784, he consented to act in a similar capacity under Sir John Stepney, the English envoy at Berlin. Here he soon manifested extraordinary ability, which was attended with uncommon ardour of mind, and a very irritable temper. Stepney being succeeded, in August 1785, by Lord Dalrymple, now Earl of Stair, Ewart continued in the same post under that nobleman; and after passing, as I have already mentioned, through the intermediate degree of secretary of legation, he was named, in 1788, envoy to the Prussian court. Placed on such

a diplomatic eminence, to which his talents had conducted him with unexampled rapidity, he rendered himself master of the cabinet and councils of Frederic William the Second, which he governed or directed with a sort of absolute sway. Hertzberg, who was then first minister, listened to his suggestions with implicit respect; and I have been assured that it is difficult to conceive or to credit the ascendancy attained by him over the sovereign and administration of Prussia. His marriage with a lady of that country, Mademoiselle Wartensleben, augmented his influence, as it seemed in some measure to naturalize him with the people among whom he resided.

Catherine the Second, and her ally the Emperor Joseph, were at that time engaged in hostilities against the Turks, which, though unsuccessful on the side of Hungary during more than one campaign, in consequence of Joseph's personal interference and presence in the field, menaced nevertheless the Ottoman empire with the loss of her finest provinces on the coast of the Black Sea. Ockzakow had already fallen into the empress's possession. Ewart not only stimulated the king and ministers of Prussia, to compel from her the restoration of so valuable a place; but he set on foot the great confederacy of England, Holland, Prussia, and Turkey, for the avowed purpose of arresting her further conquests. The death of Joseph the Second, which



took place in February 1790, facilitated the accomplishment of Ewart's plans, while it deprived Catherine of her best support. Leopold, who succeeded to his brother's dominions, adopted a pacific and healing policy, the first fruit of which was the treaty of Reichenbach, concluded between him and Frederic William. Ewart performed the principal part in it, and was personally present at its signature. His detestation of Catherine, which constituted a prominent feature of his character, impelled him to advise the British ministry to the prosecution of every measure which might effect her humiliation, and check the progress of her arms. She was well aware of his antipathy; and, apprehensive of the injurious consequences that would inevitably result from his efforts at Reichenbach, it is said that she did not hesitate having recourse to effective means for preventing his presence at the conferences which were there held previous to the treaty. A potion, it is added, was administered to him at the time when he was setting out from Berlin; but Sutherland, physician to the empress, who was a countryman of Ewart, and who knew or suspected Catherine's intention, sent him a hint *to be on his guard*. He escaped by means of emetics and medicines.

I am well aware that this is a serious imputation to bring forward even against Catherine the Second. Nor would I state it lightly: for I am

far from participating Ewart's aversion to her. I consider her indeed as a very ambitious princess, emulating every species of fame, and not fastidiously delicate as to the manner of attaining her objects. Leopold designated her with truth, when he said, that "her head ought to be encircled with glory, in order to conceal her feet which stood in blood." Her whole reign, administration, policy, wars, and private life, demonstrate that she was not scrupulous about the means by which she accomplished her plans of acquisition, vengeance, and gratification. The person from whom I received the account here given, and who is now no more, might challenge belief on very strong grounds. He was a man of calm and superior understanding, neither credulous, nor imbued with any prejudices against the empress. Add to these facts, that he was intimately acquainted with Ewart, from whom, I have no doubt, he received the particulars of Catherine's attempt. Lastly, he was in Germany at the time when the treaty of Reichenbach was concluded, as well as previous and subsequent to its signature. He possessed therefore almost all the qualities, as well as the information, requisite for forming a sound and dispassionate opinion upon the fact in question.

Leopold having concluded peace with the Turks at Sistova, Catherine, thus left alone to carry on the war with that power, might unques-

tionably have been compelled to restore all her recent acquisitions, particularly Ockzakow. The cabinets of St. James's, of the Hague, and of Berlin, acting in concert, while they were sustained by Leopold, become emperor of Germany, could have dictated to the Russian empress. Frederick William already threatened to march an army of a hundred thousand men against Riga; and every preparation was made for attacking the Livonian frontier, when the British ministry receded. These events took place during the spring of the year 1791. In embracing a line of policy calculated to set limits to Catherine's conquests on the shore of the Euxine, Pitt acted, in my opinion, with equal wisdom and justice. But, unfortunately, he could not impress the house of commons with a conviction, that interests so remote, as well as so little understood, were of sufficient importance to incur any risk of a war for their support. Many of the county members possessed a very imperfect knowledge or comprehension of the position, value, and consequence of Ockzakow. Fox, availing himself of these circumstances, inveighed with so much eloquence and effect against the ministerial system, and was supported on every division by such numbers, that it became evident, Pitt must either abandon his measures and his allies, or be finally left in a minority. In order to keep Catherine firm to her determination of not relinquishing Ockzakow,



Fox did not hesitate to send a friend and relative to Petersburg, as his agent. Adair demonstrated to the sovereign of Russia, that if she remained inflexible, the house of commons would either force Pitt to yield, or would drive him from the helm. Thus encouraged, Catherine refused to make any sacrifices of territory, or to restore Ockzakow.

The English minister, after a long conflict between political principle and love of power, at length determined to consult his preservation by renouncing his alliances. In so painful an extremity he had recourse to Ewart, who was then in London on leave of absence. To him Pitt applied, as the person who had conducted all the negotiations at Berlin; entreating him to return thither, and to state the necessity imposed on the British administration of adopting other measures. Ewart, not without extreme repugnance, undertook the commission, and executed it: but the Duke of Leeds, a nobleman of an elevated mind, though not endowed with eminent abilities, was so much shocked at the violation of national faith; which faith, he, as secretary of state for the foreign department, had pledged; that he preferred the resignation of his employment, rather than submit to be made the instrument of such humiliation. Lord Grenville replaced him in June 1791. About three months afterwards, the Duke of York's marriage with Frederic William's

daughter by his first wife, was concluded ; a transaction, in conducting which, Ewart, as the British minister at the Prussian court, took a leading part ; and the terms of which alliance, in a pecuniary point of view, he would have rendered much more advantageous to this country than were the stipulations settled, if the duke's own injudicious interference had not prevented him. No sooner, however, was the union completed, than Pitt, on very insufficient pretexts, founded ostensibly on some article in the matrimonial contract, to which Ewart had given his sanction, caused him to be recalled. He returned to England, received a pension of one thousand pounds as a remuneration for his services, and retired from office. Treatment so severe, if not unmerited, his indignant spirit could not support. He died soon afterwards at Bath.

I have been assured, from the authority to which I have already alluded, that his death was accelerated or produced by the same means that had been ineffectually tried previous to the treaty of Reichenbach ; administered by order of the same princess. Such an accusation I by no means implicitly adopt or credit : but Ewart was known to have urged the British cabinet to measures personally hostile towards the Empress of Russia ; and Catherine's vengeance, though it might be suspended, never slept. Instruments for effecting it might always be found, even in England, by a

powerful sovereign. Whether Ewart's end was natural, or whether any means were used to hasten it, I will not determine; but I know from concurring, and I may add, from official testimony, that his last words reproached Pitt, whom he accused of wanting firmness and principle. Yet it appears to me difficult to condemn Pitt's line of conduct. For, even if he had resigned, rather than abandon his engagements with Prussia, the new ministers would equally have violated them, and would have pursued an opposite policy. Such a line of action would however, I admit, have been more dignified and magnanimous. But we must recollect that previous to his being made lord warden of the Cinque Ports in 1792, Pitt possessed no means whatever of subsistence, except from the salary of his employments. He must have returned to Lincoln's Inn, or have occupied an apartment in Lord Chatham's house, who at the same time would have been compelled to leave the Admiralty. Such superiority to every sentiment of private interest, not to mention ambition, cannot be expected from man. Fox, in consequence of his successful interference to preserve Catherine's conquests, enjoyed, for a short time, a high degree of her favour. She placed his bust in her cabinet, between two of the most illustrious statesmen of modern ages, and spoke of him in language of the warmest encomium. But the part which he took in parliament subse-



quent to 1793, and the eulogiums lavished by him on the French Revolution, soon changed the empress's tone. She caused the bust to be removed; and when reproached with such a change in her conduct, she replied, "C'étoit Monsieur Fox de *Quatre-vingt-onze* que j'ai placé dans mon cabinet."

*December.* — Hitherto, during nearly twenty months that had elapsed since Pitt's confirmation in office, the *coalition*, though vanquished, remained nevertheless a compact and powerful phalanx. No desertion had yet taken place among their leaders in either house of parliament. But the month of December exhibited a specimen of political defection in the person of Mr. Eden, which excited a strong sensation. He had greatly contributed, by his influence over Lord North, to form that celebrated union, and he was the first to forsake it. Wearied with an unsuccessful and hopeless opposition, pressed by domestic demands, and conscious of possessing talents which might be rendered subservient to his own, not less than to the public advantage, Eden opened a treaty with the minister. Its results were disclosed by his double appointment, naming him one of the members of council for affairs of trade, and at the same time appointing him envoy extraordinary at the court of Versailles, for the negotiation of a commercial treaty with France. The former nomination had no emolu-

ment annexed to it ; but to the latter was joined a salary of six thousand pounds a year. Unquestionably, Pitt, in making this purchase, — for it could deserve no other title, — concluded a bargain highly beneficial to the nation. Edén possessed a species of knowledge and ability, which, except in the instance of Jenkinson, would have been vainly sought throughout the ministerial ranks. And Jenkinson, who already beheld the peerage near his grasp, might neither have relished such a mission, nor could he be conveniently spared as yet by Pitt from the treasury bench. Upon all subjects connected with trade, manufactures, revenue, and finance, Eden ranked above any individual composing the party of the opposition.

Fox, Lord North, and Sheridan, might indeed display more eloquence, wit, or humour, during a commercial debate ; but upon Eden principally devolved the task of dissecting, answering, and refuting the arguments, calculations, or propositions brought forward by the government. His desertion left therefore a void not easy to fill, and produced a corresponding sentiment of indignation among his former friends. It found vent in lampoons, epigrams, and rondeaus, some of which were most poignant. When Eden attempted an apology to Lord North for joining Pitt, and observed that “ it was not caused by any change of political attachment, but *merely arose from a tem-*

*porary affair of trade*, which he was appointed to negotiate;" "You need not trouble yourself to explain the matter," replied that nobleman,—“I have always considered the whole transaction as *a mere affair of trade*.” Fox, after hearing his reasons and excuses, only asked him if he had seen Mrs. Jordan perform? That charming actress, who just then appeared for the first time on the London theatre, attracted universal attention. The ballad entitled “Billy Eden,” set to the tune of “Ally Croaker,” concentrated the wit of the party that he had quitted, and cannot be perused with gravity. Each verse or stanza concluded thus:

“Will you give a place, my dearest Billy Pitt O!

If I can't have a whole one, O give a little bit O!”

It required some strength of nerves to support these attacks; and Eden was not supposed to possess great firmness, or to set ridicule and satire at defiance.

I was familiarly acquainted with him between 1781 and 1789, not only in London, but at Paris during his mission; and finally at Bayonne, where I met him when returning from his embassy to Madrid. In his person he rose, like Jenkinson, above the ordinary height; but Eden's figure was elegant, and wanted not grace. His countenance was thin and pale; his features regular, and full of intelligence; his manners calm, polite, and conciliating. He descended from an antient and



honourable family, resident during successive centuries in the North of England, and which had been raised to the baronetage under Charles the Second. His eldest brother, Sir John, who represented the county of Durham during several years, was a steady adherent of Fox. Eden's alliances likewise contributed to support him : for he married a daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliott, and one of his sisters was the wife of Dr. Moore, archbishop of Canterbury. When surrounded, as I have seen him, by his six daughters, he excited great interest. Pitt, who, in his continual visits to his country-house at Holwood, used to stop, and sometimes to pass the night, at Beckenham, Eden's place, not far from Bromley in Kent, distinguished one of the young ladies by particular attentions. But, either he never meditated marriage, or he finally relinquished his intention. Eden's style of eloquence was neither glowing, nor elevated, nor impassioned ; but it was correct, without digressions, always directed to the subject under discussion. He had been early initiated in public business, had filled various eminent situations at an early period of life, and might confidently look forward to higher employments. During the *coalition* administration he was made a British privy counsellor : but Lord North, (to whose party he belonged, and not to that of Fox,) did not, or probably could not, procure him a place in the distribution of

offices ; and Eden's wants propelled him towards the treasury bench, as those of Burke did, some years afterwards. *Junius*, when speaking of Wedderburn, says, that " there was something about him which even treachery could not trust." There equally existed in Eden's physiognomy, even in his manner and deportment, something which did not convey the impression of plain dealing, or inspire confidence.

Though he was a man of distinguished capacity, great application, and thorough acquaintance with state affairs, he wanted accomplishment. His knowledge of the French language was so limited at the time when he was named envoy to Paris, as to place him under a necessity of taking a master to instruct, or at least to perfect him in it : but he amply compensated for that defect, by his superior information on every point connected with the important objects submitted to his consideration. The first minister, it was universally admitted, could not have made a wiser selection. Friends, nevertheless, as well as his opponents, declaimed against Eden as an apostate. The Duke of Dorset, then our ambassador at the court of France, but who was over here on leave of absence ; and with whom, during the whole period of his embassy, I maintained a constant, unreserved correspondence ; expressed himself in terms equally severe as Fox could have done on the subject. Writing to me from his seat at

Knole in Kent, five days after Eden's appointment, on the 14th December 1785, he says, "I am now so far in my way to Paris. I wished to have had a little conversation with you respecting Eden. His desertion is a curious business. It is astonishing how angry his old friends are with him; and in my opinion, with very great reason. His situation at Paris will be new and particular. However, he has nothing to do with *my functions*; and I know he can do nothing without me, notwithstanding the *Gazette writer* has dignified him with the title of Minister Plenipotentiary." It is evident that the duke, though utterly unable, himself, to negotiate a commercial treaty with the French commissioners, yet by no means liked the intrusion of such a man as Eden, in a diplomatic character, at the court of Louis the Sixteenth.

With Eden's defection, which formed the last domestic event of importance in the year 1785, I shall terminate the fourth part of the Memoirs of my own Time.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



able in Kent, five days after Edin's appointment, on the 14th December 1785, he says, "I now go far in my way to Paris, I wished to have had a little conversation with you respecting Edin. His desertion is a curious business. It is astonishing how angry his old friends are with it, and in my opinion, with very great reason. The situation at Paris will be very and particularly so. However, he has nothing to do with any business, and I know he can do nothing without me; notwithstanding the Countess who has disfigured him with the title of 'Edin's friend'." It is evident that the Countess is a very unhappy

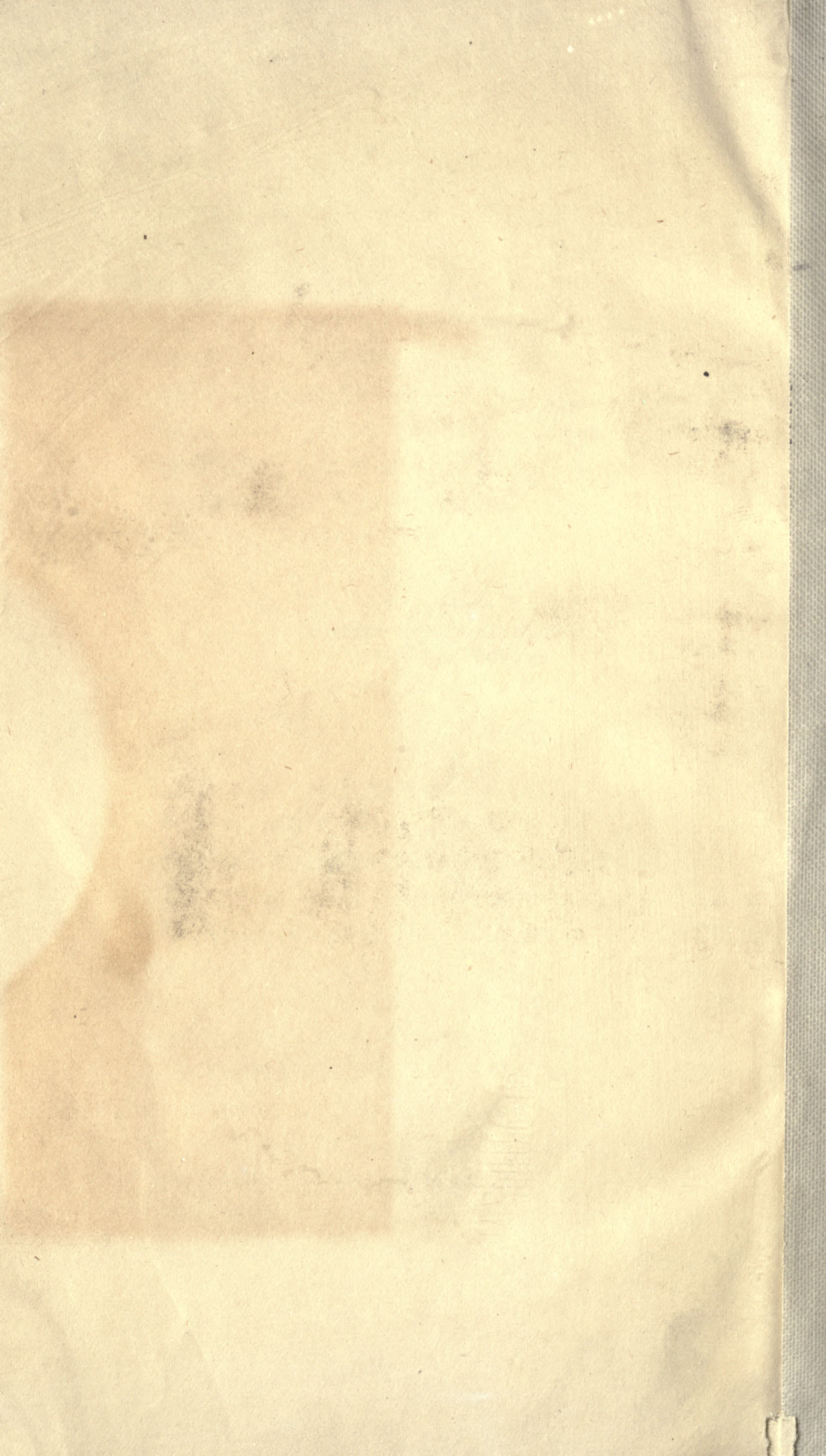
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himself, to negotiate a commercial treaty with the French commissioners, yet by no means liked the nomination of such a man as Edin, in a diplomatic character, at the court of Louis the Sixteenth. With Edin's desertion, which formed the last domestic event of importance in the year 1785, I shall terminate the fourth part of the Memoirs of my own Times. I have now to write the fifth and last part of my Memoirs, which will be the history of the last years of my life, and of the first volume of my Memoirs. I have now to write the fifth and last part of my Memoirs, which will be the history of the last years of my life, and of the first volume of my Memoirs.









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